**Weaving Webs**

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at https://archiveofourown.org/works/58667632.

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|---|---|
| Rating: | Mature |
| Archive Warning: | Major Character Death |
| Category: | Gen |
| Fandom: | Danny Phantom |
| Relationships: | Danny Fenton & Jack Fenton & Maddie Fenton, Jack Fenton/Maddie Fenton, Danny Fenton & Jazz Fenton, Danny Fenton & Jack Fenton & Jazz Fenton & Maddie Fenton |
| Characters: | Danny Fenton, Jazz Fenton, Jack Fenton (Danny Phantom), Maddie Fenton, Penelope Spectra, Bertrand (Danny Phantom), Vlad Masters |
| Additional Tags: | Body Horror, Manipulation, Emotional Manipulation, Burns, Bertrand turns into a spider for a couple of chapters, Danny Fenton's Portal Accident, Jack and Maddie Fenton are Trying to be Good Parents, fenton parents witness accident, Not an accident, Danny Fenton Wears a Full Hazmat Suit With a Mask During the Portal Accident, Danny Fenton Died in The Portal Accident, portal sabotage, Full Ghost Danny Fenton, Ghosts are creepy, Creepy Danny Fenton, Eldritch Danny Fenton, Ghost Obsessions (Danny Phantom), #spectra is her own warning, baby ghost behavior, Grief/Mourning, hazmat au, Invisobang (Danny Phantom), Invisobang 2024 (Danny Phantom) |
| Language: | English |
| Series: | Part 1 of Caught in the Spider's Web |
| Collections: | Invisobang |
| Stats: | Published: 2024-09-03 Completed: 2024-09-19 Words: 20,951 Chapters: 11/11 |

# Weaving Webs

by MaskedEmerald

Summary

The Fenton parents were there when the accident happened, they saw Danny die in an act of sabotage. Now they're just trying to go on with the strange ghost that is all that's left of Danny. While their old college friend is wondering where the subjects of his revenge are.

Notes

Its Invisobang time! I wrote a fic and the wonderful pricklenettle on tumblr did some fantastic art that you'll see embedded through out the fic!

I've been really looking forward to working on this fic and it rather grew out of proportion so its now a three parter!

See the end of the work for more notes

# Chapter 1

The metal panel came free with a few plinks of screws onto the floor making Danny cringe. He knew he'd be the one scrounging around on the floor looking for them later. His Dad grinned not at all phased by the extra work he was creating. Danny leaned over to look and was fairly certain on catching sight of the tangled mess of cables that this was his Dad's work.

"Alright Danno, I need you to get your small hands in there. Diagnostics say some of the wires didn't get plugged in right," he explained with a little chuckle at his own mistake, "I'd fix it but now the paneling's on I don't fit."

"Got it, know which ones?" Danny asked, eyeing the mess.

"Nope, some of the red ones? Some of the greens too. Just give them all a little extra push!" His Dad said before bounding off out of the portal frame to work on some other part of it.

Danny sighed and rolled his eyes, typical Dad. He used a finger to pull aside a bunch of wires to see the circuit board behind but the wires pulled others and obscured it. He huffed a little, the visor of his white hazmat suit fogging up a little before it faded. He was going to have to fix the cable management if he was going to make any progress.

As Danny picked his way through the tangled chaos of unlabeled cables he couldn't help but be reminded of a spider web. Every few moves of his hand he had to untangle himself Just to get another wire out of the tangle and neatly with the others of its colour. He had to hope that the colours had some kind of system. Even if they didn't at least they'd be able to see the board.

"Jack? Did you change this setting?" he heard from out in the lab.

"Um nope, well maybe," he could almost hear his Dad's awkward shrug.

There was the clacking of keys, "that's a bit odd."

"Huummm, maybe if we change that bit. That should get it, right?"

A spark darted from the connected wire as he disconnected it from the board and he swiftly pulled back his hands. Even with the hazmat he wasn't going to risk it. It might not be the vibrant colours of his parents' ones but that didn't mean it was more professionally made. His Dad made each of them by hand. Said they needed a bit more oomph to deal with ectoplasm. He wasn't sure how effective it would really be.

"Mom? The powers on!" He called out to them.

It wasn't meant to be. His dad had said it was off. Either he forgot, not impossible. Or something was wrong with the power system. If that was the case they'd have to shut it all down. It would be months more work before they'd be ready. Danny couldn't help feeling a little disappointed at that thought. He didn't believe it would really work but he wanted it to. Wanted it for his parents. Wanted it for the hours he'd poured in as a way to learn engineering.

"What? No it's not," his Mom replied confused, "none of the systems are reporting that."

“I unplugged it, I definitely unplugged it. Where’s that cable?” His Dad insisted.

“What the… Danny! Move now!” His Mom yelled.

Danny startled and backed away from the panel. There was a high pitched whine building behind him. He scrambled forward, his heavy bulky hazmat boots catching on themselves and every cable. There was a loud hiss and the safety shield started to descend. The power wasn’t just on, the portal was activating.

“Shit, no, not yet,” his Mom cursed, her hands practically slamming across the keys, “Jack pull the emergency breaker!”

“On it!”

He stumbled trying to crouch enough to pass under the descending shield. His head bounced in the helmet as he hit the floor. He winced and his head spun. It took a moment too long for him to get his bearings and start moving. He crawled as fast as he could, racing against the descending shield. He pulled back his hand just as the shield descended, the tips of his glove caught between reinforced glass and the metal tiled floor. He pulled it free with some effort, the fingers tearing.

“Breaker’s not stopping it Mads!”

Danny pulled himself up leaning against the glass. He flinched back as his Dad slammed the Fenton Anti Creep Stick into the reinforced glass with an echoing bang. His Mom was at the console frantically trying to get control of the machine.

He could feel a tingle as the charge in the air increased, his hair standing on end. An ominous warning that the Hazmat was no longer sealed. Electric sparks darted from metal surface to metal surface. The growing green glow that was building behind him reflected in the safety glass that trapped him there. The air grew a strange hot cold. There was a crackle like lightning and then he was engulfed in burning cold green.

# Chapter 2

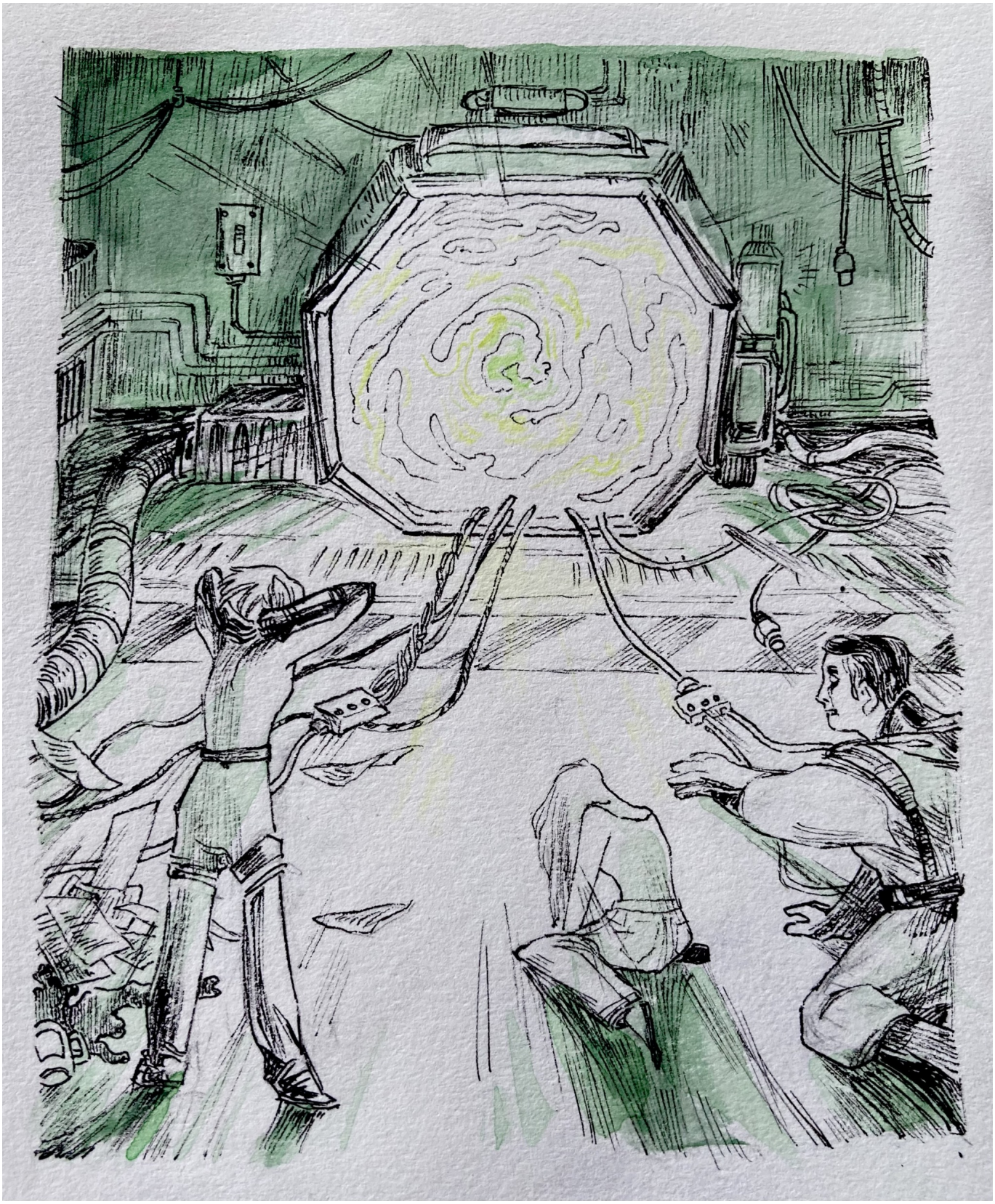
Jack rammed the bat into the safety glass so hard the bat itself broke, if he hadn't been panicking he would have cursed the time they had spent making that shield so indestructible. Maddie's hands continued to fly over the keys at the console, desperately trying to turn it off. He didn't stop, throwing his whole weight against it as green engulfed his son. A blood curdling scream pierced through the air.

Maddie flinched sharply at the scream, "no… no… come on! Just turn off! Why won't it stop!"

Frantic footsteps cascaded down the lab stairs. Jazz almost fell into the lab, her face was white as a sheet and her eyes filled with fear.

"Mom, Dad! What? What's happening?" She shouted.

The panicked shout echoed loudly in the sudden quiet as the scream cut off. A silence that chilled far more than the scream itself. The sharp overwhelming green light behind the glass had stabilized into a swirling green portal. It worked. What should have been a crowning achievement was instead the worst moment of his life. Firmly and thoroughly kicking the accident in college off its pedestal. And it was all his fault. It had to be. Maddie didn't make these kinds of mistakes, he did.



Maddie slammed a key and the shield hissed as it slowly slid up. Jazz rushed forwards and Jack was forced to grab her before she could touch the toxic portal surface. He couldn't lose anyone else to this. He should have given up long ago. Maybe then this wouldn't have happened.

A shape shifted, a dark shape beyond the green. It grew to a silhouette. Jack held his breath, unable to look away. For a moment an unbelievable hope sparked in him. A hope that despite all logic he

latched on to. He couldn’t have survived it and yet against the scientific part of his brain, that had long ago started to sound like Maddie, he believed. Shoving aside the horrified calculations of just how much electricity would have hit him, not to mention the toxic ectoplasm. A small amount to the face had hospitalized Vlad for years.

That foolish hope died quickly. A hand breached the film like surface. The smells of burning plastic and flesh joined the ozone in the air. It was quickly followed by a tumbling body crashing to the ground.

What was left of Danny lay motionless on the floor of the lab. A ragged heap of limbs. His hazmat burnt black and disintegrated in places. His left arm exposed, burnt and skeletal with white bone peeking through. Raw and oozing a colour that blood definitely wasn't, ectoplasm. The glass of his visor was cracked and the same green dribbled down from it. In the end though despite all that, it was the glow that kept him rooted to the ground. A soft white aura all around him and the slivers of slitted cracked open glowing green eyes beyond the unnatural darkness of his visor.

Jazz choked a gut wrenching sob as she tore out of Jack’s grip and ran straight for Danny. Not Danny, Jack reminded himself. The ghost. Danny’s ghost.

Maddie fumbled for a weapon. Her aim shook uncharacteristically as she aimed at what was left of their son. Jazz kneeled in front of the ghost, so close they could lose her too in an instant. It could move far faster than they could.

“Jazz! Get away from him… it!” She ordered.

“It?” Jazz choked, “what are you doing? Help him!”

“Jazz… Jazzy… that’s…” He tried, he couldn’t bring himself to say it.

“That’s Danny, Dad!” Jazz snapped, “what are you standing around for! He needs help!”

“Jazz, there isn’t any helping… it's not… it's not Danny anymore… he’s… he’s dead,” Maddie forced out, he could hear the grit in her teeth and the way her voice wavered on the edge of tears. Tears he was still too shocked to shed.

“No! No…, he’s not… he can’t be,” Jazz sobbed as she tentatively tried to find a pulse in the burnt arm while clearly trying not to hurt it further. Her search quickly became more frantic with each moment of failure. Her fingers doing little more than cracking the skin and causing more green to well up.

“Jazz…” he started, stepping forward. He needed to pull her away but at the same time he didn’t. He understood. He didn’t want it to be true.

She cried out with a huge sob before crashing into Jack in a shaky hug. He wrapped his arms around her. His own tears finally began to fall. Shock fading into pain. He glanced at Maddie who’s focus was still on the unmoving ghost. She stepped closer.

“No!” Jazz quickly pulled away from him at the sound of Maddie’s boot against the metal floor, she held her arms outstretched to block Maddie, “you can’t! Even if… even if… isn’t he… isn’t he still Danny.”

“Jazz, it's a ghost… it's not Danny anymore… it's just an echo. It's dangerous,” Maddie soothed, lowering her pistol if only to not be pointing it at Jazz. It wouldn’t hurt but that didn’t make it scary.

Jazz scowled. Jack knew that look. That look when she got angry at something she thought was wrong. That look when she questioned authority. He’d seen it at many parent teacher conferences.

“How… how do you know that… he’s… he’s not done anything yet! Danny wouldn’t hurt anyone!” She shouted through her tears.

“Jazzy, ghosts are evil… I don’t want it to be but it's the science,” Jack said softly, he never wanted to be wrong more. He never wanted all of science to be wrong. It wasn’t just their research after all.

“Science!? How can you say it's science!? There hasn’t been any proof till now, if that isn’t just… just Danny’s body,” her voice cracked.

Jack winced, would it be better if it was just a body? Then they wouldn’t have to deal with what Danny had become. Jazz didn’t understand. She’d never believed in ghosts. She hadn’t seen the proofs. Proofs from their early work. Proofs from their fellow researchers.

The ghost moved, a twisting movement. Slow and sluggish but still dangerous. Easily within reaching distance of Jazz.
“Jazz! Move now!” Maddie insisted loudly.

An arm shifted and moved in her direction. Jack moved, adrenaline surging all over again. He’d already lost Danny, he couldn’t loose Jazz too. Not to Danny’s own ghost. Danny wouldn’t want that. Jack grabbed her wrist and pulled her away from it.

Jack held Jazz against him, hand on her back to soothe the angry distraught sobs. Her hands pushed against him. She didn’t believe them about the dangers of the… ghost that was left of Danny. Maddie’s pistol was trained on the ghost as it shifted. Attempting to push itself up only for the shaking burnt arm to buckle under it. It hit the floor with a smack.

“Let me go, he’s hurt! He needs…” Jazz protested as she struggled against him.

It twisted and squirmed again, finally pushing itself up with the one good arm. Jack stiffened and tightened his hold on Jazz as its green lamp light like eyes beyond the pitch black cracked visor fixed on them. He could hear the whine of Maddie’s pistol charging. Jazz had stilled and gone silent as it tilted its head unnaturally. In a way that made him wonder if his neck had broken before he'd... died.

Jack expected it to attack. He was waiting for it. Waiting for the tension before the spring of it launching itself at them. Whatever vague memory of what happened that had imprinted onto the ectoplasm probably blamed them. He expected it to be vengeful, instead it blinked in a way that reminded him of Danny’s confused look. It just seemed confused and disoriented. Like it wasn’t sure how to react. An almost electrical whine that was almost like a scared pained whimper, lights flickering. Even without seeing Danny’s eyes looking at him, even without hearing Danny’s voice in pain, he couldn’t not think about how it was Danny. It was all that was left and it was just sitting there.

Jazz slipped his grip suddenly, she scrambled over to the ghost despite her having to know now that it wasn’t really the Danny they had just lost. It didn’t lunge or strike her. It sat there continuing that electrical whine as she carefully checked it over.

“Mads?” Jack glanced over to her, her pistol was still aimed but her hands shook, “it's not attacking… you don’t think…”
She shook her head, “it's a trick… that's what ghosts do. It’s not different just because it’s Danny.” She didn’t sound so certain.

Jazz looked up, that indignant fury on her tear streaked face, “stop it! He’s Danny right.”

“Jazz, that's not how ghosts work…” Maddie started.

“An echo, I know you’ve said it a million times. Does that matter? Even if I believed that crap! He’s Danny, he’s hurt. I don’t care if he’s an echo or not!” Jazz snapped.

It didn’t matter. It was Danny, what was left of him and Jack couldn’t live with himself if he didn’t take the chance that something of Danny might still be there. If somehow Danny’s ghost was different. If he was wrong, he’d deal with it then. Two ghost hunters could surely handle one newly formed ghost if it turned out he was wrong.

Jack walked past Maddie and knelt down next to Jazz. There wasn’t anything he could do to help a ghost but he could at least make it clear where he stood. Jazz gave him a grateful little smile that quickly fell away.
“Jack?” Maddie questioned, her voice shaking.

“Mads… I can’t… I mean it’s Danno… what's left of him. I can’t not take the chance that we can still have some part of him.” He looked over at her, hoping his words would break through to the part of her that he knew had to feel the same.

“I… know but what if… what if this is just an act? What if it changes Jack? We have to…” She insisted but still the shaking pistol lowered a little.

“And what if it doesn’t… what if we’re wrong. I can’t live with that. If it changes we’ll face it then. Please.”

# Chapter 3

Maddie lay in bed looking up at the ceiling, Jack snored beside her. He'd only just fallen asleep now as the birds outside began to sing. A night of sleepless numb pain. She peeled off the cover and set about heading downstairs. She wished it was a nightmare. That beyond Danny's door he was sleeping like normal. He wasn't and he wouldn't be again. The house itself was unearthly quiet. Was what was left of Danny gone? Faded away with nothing to anchor it. It hadn't exactly been very conscious. A very fragile echo. It had just sat in the lab for hours before they managed to pull themselves away. She feared it being yes and yet also hoped that would be the case. At least then he would rest in peace.

That silence didn't last. It was cut through with a sharp horrifying scream. Maddie's half drunk coffee spilled onto the floor along with the shattered remains of her mug. She rushed out of the kitchen and took the stairs as fast as she could. Wishing she was going down if only because she knew she could have gotten to Jazz faster that way. Jack exploded out of the bedroom, there was little that could wake him once he was out but this was one of them. He almost pulled Jazz's door off its hinges as Maddie caught up to him with an ecto pistol readied in her hand.

Jazz had only screamed once. That had been terrifying in itself but now they could see her it was something else. Jazz was huddled up in the corner of her bed. Her knees pulled up around her as she shook with sobs. At the other end of her bed was the mass of slightly transparent black that was Danny's ghost. The bulky hazmat looked strange as it curled far easier than it should, allowing for the ghost to nest like a cat on the end of the bed. The very sight of him had a lance of cold pain through her heart.

Green eyes blinked at her, head tilted. Of course the ghost didn't understand. How could it? It hadn't expressed any of Danny's knowledge or understanding. She could feel her eyes sting, empty of tears from too many the night before. It was what was left but it barely was. She placed herself between Jazz and the ghost and guided her out.

Maddie led Jazz downstairs to the kitchen. She paused to sweep up the remains of the mug she'd dropped before starting to make another. This time pouring out 3 mugs as Jack stumbled into the room. He wasn't getting back to sleep now. Maddie felt a bit like a puppet on a string as she made breakfast on auto drive. Her mind blank, too tired to think. Too numb.

That numbness was broken into fresh sharp edges when she found herself setting down a plate for Danny. The moment she placed it in front of the empty seat it was like everything came crashing down around her all over again. She sobbed. Jack's arms wrapped around her. He too was shaking with sobs.

A chill fell over the kitchen, more than a breeze from an open window. Blood curdling. Cold fingers down her spine. She shuddered violently. She wasn't the only one. Glimmering flakes of black fell from the ceiling.

When she glanced up her weapon was out in a second before she had a chance to fully compute the origin of the glowing mass, she was seeing half phased through the ceiling. The flakes were falling from the burnt hazmat suit. Ash. It hung upside down and its head tilted. Its eyes focused on the gun in her hand. Jazz sobbed. Maddie flinched and dropped the gun. It clattered to the floor, its eyes followed for a moment before focusing on them again.

It slipped through the ceiling, dropping slightly as if still affected by gravity despite remaining floating. It hovered prodding at the discarded ectogun. She scrambled to snatch it away from the ghost. She readied it again but didn't raise it. She couldn't, not in front of Jazz. Not if the ghost hadn't attacked. She didn't believe it could be harmless but there was that hope.

She held the pistol ready, expecting to have to shoot. Expecting for the ghost to lunge at her to get to the weapon. It didn't. It drifted over to Jack and perched on the back of his abandoned chair.

Jazz leant away from the ghost, "he… he came through the ceiling. It's real. Why does it have to be real?"

Jack tried to comfort her with a hand on her shoulder as he shielded her. She pulled away and fled the room. The ghost's head followed Jazz as she fled. Maddie tensed ready to run after the ghost if it went for Jazz. Its head tilted but it didn't leave the perch on the back of the chair. It looked back to them. Maddie couldn't help but feel relieved at the sound of footsteps up the stairs. Jazz was out of range for now and if the ghost did what was expected then Jazz wouldn't have to see them deal with it.

Maddie let the tension flow out a little and lowered the weapon slightly. The other shoe hadn't dropped yet. Jack dropped into Jazz's abandoned chair just to avoid sharing with the ghost.

"What are we going to do Jack? What happens when things go wrong. We have to sleep, we can't watch it 24/7."

"I don't know Mads. I don't know," he said, shaking his head, cradling his head in his hands.

The ghost floated there, just watching them. She circled it, not letting it out of her sight as she approached the kitchen door. She passed the pistol off to Jack who looked up at her.

"I'm going to check on Jazz, you watch the ghost."

She slipped from the kitchen still not letting her back face the ghost. Whipping round as she reached the stairs.

"You're good, you have to be. Even if you're just an echo. I don't think we could handle otherwise," she heard Jack plead as she made her way up the stairs.

Jack wasn't wrong.

# Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

More creepy Danny art this chapter! pricklenettle did such a good job on all of these! I love the little details on the fridge!

The lab was dim, an electric twilight. The lights blared overhead as they usually would but her eyes were too over compensated. Something bright, like looking at the sun burned in her vision. Her ears rang with screams. She couldn't move. Shadowy, skeletal hands gripped her feet. Her face. His hand. Scraping her skin with rough burnt skin. Forcing her to watch. Unable to stop it. Those cold hands held her arms as she tried to fight free.

You don't get to look away.

It's your fault, you let him go in.

This is all because of you.

A sharp chill deeper than the cold hands drew a violent shiver. Like an ice bath. Colder.

Maddie jerked awake, that chilling feeling still in her spine despite being awake. She stared up at the ceiling trying not to think. The waking world wasn't much better than that nightmare after all. She frowned, noticing that it was much lighter than she had thought. Later in the morning than she had thought. She sighed knowing that she wouldn't get back to sleep now and started to push herself up.

There was a soft white glow at the foot of the bed. Its legs were gone, blended into a tail that twisted round itself to curl up. The tattered sleeve and skeletal arm exposed. The bony fingers stretched out towards her. She shifted just a bit too much of the blanket as she tried to escape the bed unnoticed. Danny's ghost lifted a tilted head. She froze for a moment but it didn't lunge.

It followed her throughout the house, keeping to shadows or perching on high locations. Like the top of the fridge where it had settled during breakfast. Jazz kept glancing in its direction and left quickly the moment she could. Her breakfast, only half finished.

It appeared to once again fall asleep there. She watched it. It didn't make sense, ghosts didn't need sleep. Or at least none of the research said they did. Maybe it was wrong. Maybe this was a feature of newer ghosts. Would it sleep less the longer it was… dead? Would anything else change over time? Was it only a matter of time before it became malevolent like the research said?

Research… research said that this shouldn't have happened. The portal shouldn't have turned on. They had worked hard to make sure there wouldn't be another accident. Not after Vlad. She had to know why? Why did this happen? Why was Danny…? Was it their fault? Had they made this mistake?

She glanced to the lab door in the corner. She didn't want to face it but she had to. Had to know why. Her hand hovered shakily over the handle. The ghost shuffled in its place on the fridge. A high pitched whine. A constant reminder of what happened. A reminder she couldn't escape. A question that would quite literally haunt her forever if she didn't find an answer. She took a deep breath and turned the handle.

The descent into the lab was a slow one. Each step felt massive and the bottom still shadowed in the darkness they had left it in on the day of the incident. The lights flickered on weakly, revealing the scattered chaos that had been them trying to save Danny.

She crossed to the console, that was where part of the problem was. The only part she could access. The only place she could get answers from. The portal frame itself was inaccessible behind the swirling green of their window into the ghost zone. The death trap that had killed Danny. The swirls played tricks on her tired mind, the silhouette of a mass of something beyond the portal. A shape close to the floor. Even if it was really there she didn't want to see. The horror of a mangled, incinerated body that her mind supplied was bad enough. She couldn't handle the real thing.

The console reported back that the portal was active. It understood that. It wasn't a bool issue in the code. Something reporting false when it should have said true stopping her from turning off the machine it didn't think was on. It knew it was on. That meant the emergency controls were the problem. She poured over the code trying to find the control error. A mistyped variable or something. Anything that would explain what happened.

What she found was worse. Or maybe better, if only because it meant it wasn't them. They hadn't caused this. There was an override coded into the emergency shutdown. An override that linked back to a start-up sequence they had never coded. It was set to initiate start-up while someone was inside. Specifically while the wiring was being worked on. Some of the wires had been bypassed to allow the machine to work even if they had been unplugged. Wires that had once been important to function were now just a trigger. Sabotage.

Jack was meant to be dealing with the wiring, it had only been passed to Danny since the paneling went on. Had someone been trying to kill Jack? No, that didn't make sense. Why would… but then why would anyone target anyone else in the family. She couldn't think of anyone who hated them like that. Even the Mansons didn't disapprove of them that much. Even if she could think of someone this required a certain level of understanding of their work. Few had that privilege. Vlad from college but that would have been long outdated with how long it had been and their direct overseers from the GIW. Neither really had opportunity and reason. Had it not been about them at all? Was someone trying to halt their work and unintentionally caught Danny in the crossfire? Still she couldn't think of who. The GIW were literally paying them, sabotage would just make it worthless. Vlad had nothing to gain, he wasn't even in the field any more.

She frustratedly shook her head, there was no use speculating when she really had no clues. Maybe Jack would know something. If not at least he wouldn't be blaming himself like she had been. She took a few moments to document the evidence and hide it away. Whoever it was had somehow gained access to their computers if not the lab itself, she couldn't risk it being covered up. Maddie

was not going to let this go unpunished. She was going to find who did this and she was going to make them pay.

Satisfied that the files were preserved she headed for the stairs. Jack was probably still sleeping. She'd wake him. He'd want to be told as soon as possible.

It was like a cold hand crawled up her spine. She froze, one foot on the next step, halfway up the stairs. Her heart beat faster and she couldn't help but feel on edge. Each next step was tentative and cautious. Her eyes scanned the kitchen and fell on the sleeping ghost on the fridge top. She let out an uncomfortable awkward laugh. Of course it was the ghost. She should have realized that was what they were feeling. That natural human fear response to a ghost's aura. Of course they would be feeling that, made only worse by the very real grief.

She found Jack exactly where she expected him to be. He was sleeping but it hadn't been peaceful. The covers around him were rumpled and his eyes bagged. He had probably been lying there awake for a good portion of the night. She knew she had been before the exhaustion took her into that nightmare.

"Jack?" she asked softly as she gently shook him. Thankfully he didn't startle, his eyes opened awkwardly with a tired and confused groan.

"Mads? What is it?" he paused, wiping sleep out of his eyes, "did something happen?" concern drifted onto his face and was alleviated as she shook her head.

"I found something. The accident," she stumbled over the memory of it, "it wasn't. I was looking through the control panel files. They'd been changed."

"Sabotage?"

She nodded, "someone bypassed the safety controls and the power. They rigged it to go off while you were working."

"But I hadn't… I passed it off to…" his face dropped, "if I hadn't then… Mads this…"

"Jack, that doesn't make it your fault. Danny wanted to help and we didn't know. We couldn't have," if anyone was to know it would be her she'd noticed something had been changed, even if it wasn't obviously malicious at the time.

"Who is then, who even had access?"

"I don't know but now we know we can find out," Maddie said firmly, a promise. Another promise unsaid but clear, that whoever was responsible was going to regret this.

# Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Jack knocked on the door of Jazz's bedroom. She'd been shut in her room aside from the occasional appearance in the kitchen for meals since the incident. It had only been a few days but he couldn't help but be worried. She also wasn't answering. He knew it wasn't intentionally Danny's fault, the ghost was downstairs waiting. Add on to that the ghost didn't seem to have any intentional actions.

"Jazzerincess? We're watching a movie! Something fun!" He called through the door hoping that it would tempt her.

There was a long silence before a strained voice replied, "can't Dad, I've got too much catching up to do."

He frowned, he should have expected that. She'd always been deep into her school work, it made sense that she'd throw herself into it even more now. What would Jazz call it? A coping mechanism?

"You sure?"

"Yes Dad."

"Then how about we all help out in the kitchen?" He offered, that would help right?

"… no," she said quietly, "I… just go away…"

Jack sighed, slumping as he moved away from the door. He'd been hoping for just a little bit of normal. For all of them. He'd managed to pull Maddie out of the lab and actually for once Danny was the easiest to get involved, but he tried not to think about why.

Jack trudged back down the stairs to the living room where Maddie and Danny were waiting. Maddie sat on the sofa, her limbs held close and taught, ready to move at a moment's notice. Her eyes not even straying up to him from watching Danny. He hated how uncomfortable everyone was. Even him.

He dropped onto the sofa, it sagged and Maddie tilted into him. She jolted and then relaxed against him, marginally. Danny looked up at him from where he was curled up on one of the arm chairs. Jack doubted he had legs right now with how twisted up he was. There was a questioning tilt to his head. The lights overhead flickered a little and a line scanned across the TV. It was just a little off from the consistent flickers that Danny caused.

"Is Jazz coming?" Maddie asked.

“She said no… I don’t think she’s doing well.”

Maddie sighed, “I don’t think any of us are. She’ll work through it in her own time. We can’t rush her. Just give her space,” she paused, “it's better that way anyway. At least up there she’s not near the ghost. Not in danger.”

“Right…” he glanced at Danny’s ghost, “you still want to watch?”

The TV fizzed with static, the screen sharply filling with snow. Danny shot off flying past the TV and up through the ceiling. Had he understood what was going on?

“I hope he isn't mad…” Jack frowned looking at where he had vanished.

“You saw how it reacted. We should go find it before it does something,” Maddie said, getting to her feet.

“It's Danny, Maddie. he'll come round,” Jack consoled.

“That was before he was a ghost… we still don't know when the other shoe will drop,” she looked away, “I don’t want it to but all the research says it will happen.”

Jack’s face fell. He didn’t want to think like that either. He wanted to think that Danny was different. He’d seemed so excited to be watching a movie together after everything that had happened but they couldn’t be sure if he really understood what was happening aside from them all sitting together. It was so hard to tell anything with him no matter how much Jack wanted to believe that he was just the same Danny. He wouldn’t be, there was no way that this Danny wasn’t different. Their research was certain of that. Their research said if a ghost didn’t get what it wanted then destruction and chaos was only a matter of time.

“Dad! Something’s wrong with my laptop!” Jazz’s voice called down the stairs.

Maddie frowned, “you check on Jazz. I’ll look for Danny.”

Jack nodded, he wanted to look for Danny too but Jazz needed support. Fixing her laptop was something even if it wasn’t as big an impact as he was hoping for. Both of them headed up the stairs but Maddie turned to go to Danny’s room. One Danny hadn’t been in at all the last few days. He’d mostly been sticking close to the rest of them. The chill that had vanished when Danny left returned at the top of the stairs. A confirmation that he was still upstairs and hadn’t looped back down into another room. That he hadn’t tried to go through the roof. Technically it was ghost proofed but there had never been a chance to test it with a real ghost.

Jazz's laptop screen was completely covered by a snowstorm of static. the speakers sounded like crumpling tinfoil and uncomfortably electrical. It would fizz and crackle as the static distorted Even more across the display. Jack tapped at buttons to no effect. Whatever this was, he was going to need his tool kit and a replacement screen. Maybe even a whole new laptop with the noise the speakers were making.

“Huh looks like your screen’s gone. Oh maybe we have something we can use in the lab!”

Jazz’s frustrated expression dropped and she paled, “no! No need. I’ll… I’ll just plug it into Danny’s monitor. No need for experimental things from the lab Dad.”

Jack deflated, right. Of course that was a bad idea. Even if it was sabotage they still didn’t know if anything else was affected. Jazz would want nothing to do with the lab after what happened.

“Right, okay no lab stuff. How about we check it with Danno’s monitor and if it's still funny I’ll take it to a repair shop tomorrow.”

Jazz nodded and leant over to reach the plug under her desk. She yelped and her chair clattered to the floor. She stumbled backwards leaving a clear view of under her desk. What he had thought was

a light from her checking the plug already was actually the glow of Danny. The ghost was huddled under the desk, knees pulled up to his chest in a way that shouldn't have been possible in the bulky suit if he wasn't a ghost. His glowing eyes were watching them. His hands tangled in the power cable.

Jack startled, grabbing Jazz and pulling her back before he had a chance to think. Danny was unlikely to be a danger at the moment. He was probably just there because Jazz was.

"Danny?" Jazz breathed.

"Fizzzt crackle Jazz zpt Jazzy crackle fizzzt," her speakers crackled as Danny twisted the power cable.

The noise was grating like nails down a chalkboard but at the same time there was something he was sure he'd heard in all that crackling static. It had been her name. Jazzy was something static didn't normally sound like.

"Jazzy? Wait… are you… are you talking?"

"Ghost Speak! The tech interference is Ghost Speak! Mads, mads! Did you hear that!"

He was talking! There had been theories about the interference being an attempt to communicate in the research for years but there had never been definitive proof. Most recordings had just been white noise and the words too indistinct enough to actually be words. Even before this Danny's interference had just been proximity based. Had he been trying to communicate all that time and only just figured it out?

Maddie whipped through the door, her pistol ready. Still expecting the other shoe to have dropped. Jack was less concerned, if Danny was going to do anything he would have before he was discovered.

"What happened?" she asked, aiming the pistol defensively.

"Danno's talking!" Jack grinned.

"Talking?" She blinked, surprised. The weapon was lowered slightly.

"Fizzzt crackle lone? zpt lonely? Crackle sad fizzzt." the laptops speakers garbled out.

Maddie stared. Jack let Jazz go, Danny wasn't the threat. They were. He was a lonely child, a one that depending how much he remembered had been through something horrifyingly traumatic. And Maddie and him were treating him like a ticking time bomb. Jack had wanted to believe but he was still on edge. Expecting the worst despite his hope. He didn't even hesitate to pull Jazz away.

Jazz sat down on her bed, more a slump than a sit. Tears down her face. Jack had a feeling she was also blaming herself for avoiding Danny.

"You're not, we're here Danny," she muttered softly.

Jack pushed Maddie's pistol lower and approached Danny, "it's alright Danno. We're all here. You're not alone."

"Fizzt Jazzt… Jazzt fizzt zpt lonely… Crackle"

It was hard to understand the words past the crackle and static. Not to mention the fragmented broken nature of the words. It helped that his eyes were focused on Jazz past him.

“Fizzzt missssss you… crackle Jazzzt alone Fizzt”

“Me?” Jazz questioned, “all this and you’re worrying about me? Oh Danny. I’m… okay okay, I’m not alright. I just…”

That was Danny, or at least some of Danny. A small confirmation that something more had carried over. He knew them, he could communicate and he was worrying about Jazz. Or at least that's what it looked like. He could see it in Maddie’s face. The way she still held the pistol that she was still wary. Still doubtful. It actually gave Jack a little hope that there was more of Danny in there.

“The movie is still on the table,” he offered.

Jazz nodded, “okay… I’ll try.”

Chapter End Notes

And thus Danny speaks! His mind's not all there but hey communication!

# Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

Fun chapter! Well sort of, depends how you take it, this is the Danny Phantom fandom after all. Even our fun chapters can have angst.

Cupboard doors clattered open and closed. From where she was on the stairs and the early hour Jazz could only assume it was Danny attempting to amuse himself while they slept. She entered the kitchen fully prepared to try and explain to her little brother that humans needed to sleep and he should keep it down. If she was more awake she'd be more upset by the idea. She was trying hard to not let the fact that he was a ghost get to her. To treat him as normal but he wasn't. Things like this were a reminder that Danny didn't remember what it was like to be human. That hurt.

He was still Danny, worrying about all of them even when he was the one that had been hurt more than any of them but that was emotional. He seemed to get that but not the physical.

Now he was bored and a bored Danny could be a noisy one. She didn't blame him. The remote bricked when he tried to use it himself. Though she wasn't sure he actually knew how to use it. He'd just sort of waved it around.

What she found wasn't Danny but her Mom searching the room frantically. A pot of coffee sitting cooling on the bench without a mug.

"Mom?" she asked confused

Her Mom startled, "Jazz? Oh sorry… I didn't wake you did I?"

"No," she shook her head.

"Nightmare?"

"Yeah… you?" Jazz had been trying not to think of the fading memory of the nightmare. Sleep hadn't been easy.

"The same," her Mom said with a tired sigh.

"What are you looking for? The mugs are in here," Jazz said, opening the cupboard. It wasn't as full as normal, the dishes having piled up a little, but there were still a few.

"I know… I know… but… Danny's NASA mug… it's missing."

"Have you checked his room? He probably used it before…" now he was never going to get to again. Ghosts didn't need to. Did he even have a mouth? A face. She couldn't bring herself to finish the sentence.

“I haven’t… I didn’t see it before but…” she struggled with her words, “it's been hard, I… I didn’t go in. I just couldn’t.”

Jazz didn’t go back to bed. There wasn’t much point. For a while she and her Mom sat in the living room, away from the mugs and dirty dishes. They’d have to be dealt with eventually but now was not the time. She did, however nod off.

She was woken as the sofa beneath her shifted. She floundered a little as she sat up. Half the sofa in the air. Her Dad’s face appeared as he lowered it. A sheepish look on his face as he caught sight of her.

“Sorry Jazz, I was trying not to wake you.”

“By lifting the sofa? Dad what on earth are you doing?” she asked.

“Looking for my needlepoint, I just don’t remember where I had it last.”

He continued to frustratedly search. Lifting chairs and the coffee table. She scanned the room expecting to spot it being the less frustrated one. A single spool of thread lay on the floor where it had fallen when he lifted the coffee table but not the hoop.

Despite joining the search more actively they had no luck in actually finding the needlepoint. It was a disappointment. Her Dad hadn’t touched it since Danny’s incident and just like the rest of them he needed something normal to fall back on.

That night sleep wasn’t coming easily, she’d tossed and turned for hours with no luck. Exhaustion hadn’t come. Even if it did, the night would be filled with nightmares. She glanced round the dark room for something that would be a comfort. Bearbert was missing from his spot on her shelf. Maybe he was on her desk? She’d been relying on the bear a lot over the week. She flicked on her bedside light. The desk was empty aside from her laptop. She stumbled out of bed and checked under the bed and the desk using her phone as a torch. Still nothing.

Had she left it somewhere else about the house?

Jazz staggered tiredly out of her room headed for the living room. She’d had the bear down there recently. She didn’t remember where she’d last put him down. She reached the top of the stairs when she noticed the glow from Danny’s end of the corridor. A string of static noises hissing quietly from the tech in his room.

Maybe he had seen Bearbert.

It took a little deep breath to pick up the courage to go down the corridor, the chill dropping down her spine. He was always scarier in the dark. He’s still Danny, she reminded herself. Just a little different.

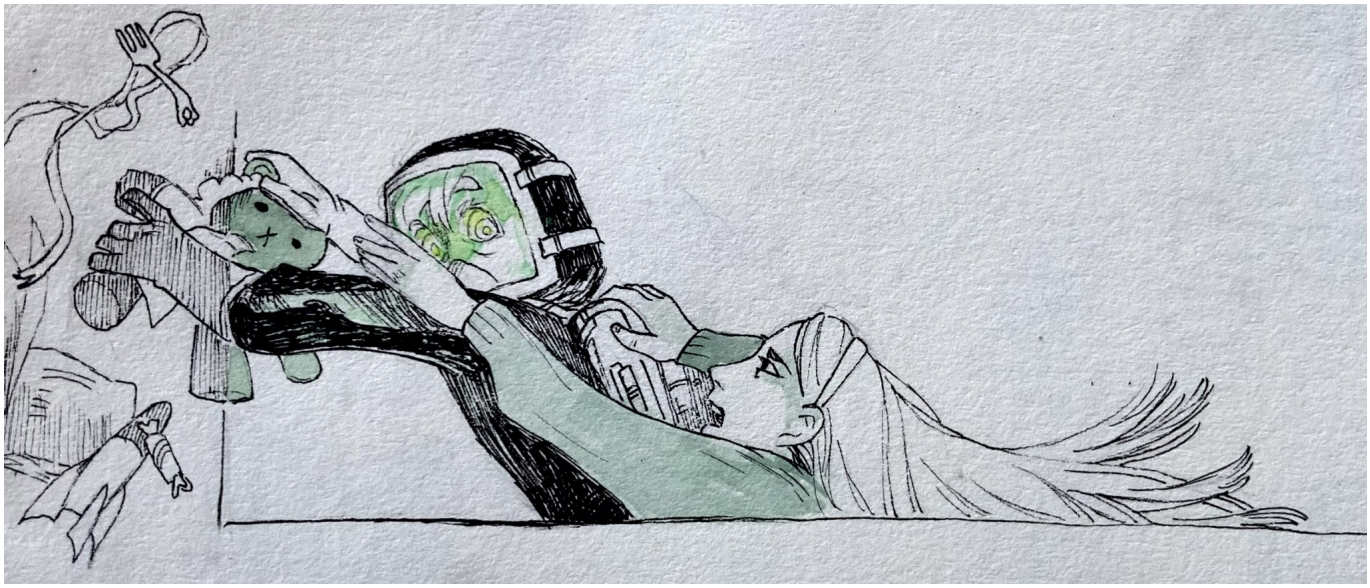
“Danny? Have you seen…” her sentence cut off as she caught sight of Danny as she came round the door frame.

He was floating near the wall of his room, above his bed. His eyes wide like a deer caught in the headlights. Or like when he was younger being caught red handed at something he knew he wasn’t meant to be doing. Even with the black faceplate for a face she could still recognise that expression.

“What are you up to?” She questioned leaning to get a better look at what he was hiding behind the bulky Hazmat.

There half phased into his wall was Bearbert. Just the legs of her beloved bear were sticking out of the wall.

“Danny!” she snapped before even thinking about the late hour, “what are you doing?”



“Look after… goooood. Gooood thing, safe,” his speakers crackled.

Her Mom burst into the room, hair messy and frazzled. A pistol in hand. She froze and stared as Jazz lunged at Danny. Pulling on him and trying to get to Bearbert.

“Give him back Danny!”

Danny floated up holding the bear that came out of the wall as he did, “safe, keep safe. For Jazzt.”

He cackled, even if it came from across the room it was like a real laugh. She pouted, he was messing with her.

“Danny give it back. Please,” Jazz grabbed his ankle but it whisped away into a tail, “Danny!”

Jack staggered in, “what’s going on?”

“I… I’m not sure. Danny’s ghost stole Bearbert,” her mom replied.

“Okay, it's not like he didn’t do that before.”

“I guess, but still why? Why hide it in the wall?”

Her Dad shrugged as Jazz managed to get Bearbert back in her arms. He’d given it back, if he wanted to he could have played keep away for hours. It was as she held the bear that she noticed a needle caught on its fur, a thread leading back to the wall.

“Danny! Just how much have you been hiding!”

He crackled a laugh.

# Chapter 7

Chapter Notes

Here is chapter seven! We are now half way through the fic but I need a little time to tidy up the other chapters because of IRL chaos so after this I'll be catching up on editing next week. I'll be going to a weekly posting schedule for the second half.

Also if I had to pick I would say that this chapter has my favourite art but that is mostly because I was just so excited to see a certain gremlin Danny that shows up at the chapter's end!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Maddie leant against Jack on the sofa, the week had left her drained from all the stress on top of the grief. She watched him stitch, the needle going in and out. His hoop had been returned, after some convincing. The hoarding behaviour hadn't been an expected trait. The ghost was currently sitting on the floor cuddling Jazz's Bearbert while Jazz was reading in the armchair.

Danny's ghost made a strange popping noise, like pressure bubbling up against the glass face plate. It spasmed a shiver and then shook its head. A pale white mist hissing out of the cracks in the face plate. Maddie watched cautiously as it happened another two times. Was this it? Was this the ghost becoming more like what they expected? Or was it some other anomaly they hadn't known ghosts did.

Jack beside her laughed, "hiccups? Were those hiccups? Can ghosts even have those?"

Maddie frowned, "that requires breathing Jack," she stated.

There was little point considering the hypothesis. It might be something like a hiccup but an actual hiccup required breathing. Depressurization of the suit was more likely but that still required it to act more like the real physical version of the material and by this point the suit should have been long since depressurized with the torn open arm. It made the noise again, this time the spasm and noise harsher and longer lasting.

"A sneeze?" Jack questioned beside her.

Once again that required breathing. Also irritants and she couldn't think what might have triggered that. Before she had much time to further ponder the strange action that seemed to be confusing the ghost as much as it was her. It tilted its head. Then there was a rush of green. Ecto green shapes bursting up from the floor. A swirl of limbs. Danny's ghost carried off with them. Jazz scrambled back, knocking over the armchair.

Maddie leapt to her feet grabbing her ecto gun. One she wished she had reached for the moment the, for lack of a better word, hiccuping had started. Jack was not far behind her. Flashes of teeth and claws slashed at the ghost's hazmat body, splattering green as they pulled it up through the ceiling followed by a couple of just too late shots from her blaster.

She rushed for the stairs, Jack behind her and Jazz clinging to him to avoid getting carried off as well. She hated that she was hoping that they were intentionally just targeting Danny's ghost. At least the ghost would fare better than Jazz.

There was a crashing sound from their bedroom and she burst through the door. The ghost of a ragged looking wolf had been somehow thrown from the mass of ghosts attacking and into their mirrored closet door. It shook off and bounded back to the mass, she took it out with a strong blast that appeared to knock it out. She didn't trust it but there wasn't time for much more. The ghosts had to be dealt with before they ended up putting the ghost proofing of the roof to the test.

Jack had found the bazooka, she noted as he barreled into the room behind her as she shot into the mass trying to break up the ghosts. She didn't get the chance to warn him to watch his aim. The blast fired, a large mass of charged ecto green. It slammed into the ghosts, repelling them till they impacted the walls. Danny's ghost was not an exception and was the exception she had wanted to warn Jack to watch out for. She winced as it was thrown against the wall. A nasty thud and the sound of something impacting the glass of its visor.

No ghosts moved.

Maddie held her pistol ready, eyeing the other ghosts as she approached Danny's. Jack rushed past her.

"Danno! Sorry… sorry! Arg… idiot," he called himself.

The lights flickered overhead and the alarm clock whined. The ghost looked up, its eyes wide but dazed, green spots failing to actually meet his. A green splatter marked the inside of the visor glass where its forehead would have been. The suit scattered with scratches and cuts. There were clear bites glowing green as they leaked ecto.

She crouched down, "just a bump, the others took most of the blast. It will probably be fine Jack."

"But… I shouldn't have even… I just didn't think about it affecting him."

The ghost pushed itself up and slumped against Jack. Another whine.

"What a strange ghost," Maddie commented, her grip tightened on her weapon for a moment, "it clearly doesn't blame you."

Jack gave a sad smile, "he still got hurt."

"Pass it here, I'll take it to the lab and do what I can to patch it up, while you check on Jazz," she offered.

She was the one more experienced in first aid though how much use that would be to a ghost was another matter. Then there was the matter of Jazz, dealing with the defeated ghosts and making sure there wouldn't be anymore.

Jack let her take the ghost from him, "any ideas what to do with the ghosts? The other ones?" she asked, they didn't really have any tried and tested containment.

"There's still some leftover anti-ecto insulation. I'll grab it!"

She scooped up the ghost, finding it not quite what she had expected. She hadn't really touched it before. It was cold yes and sent shivers down her spine from the cold but she hadn't expected the feel of the hazmat to be so realistic. She avoided the burnt arm, not wanting to feel the cracked, charred skin.

Jazz lingered in the corridor, "is he going to be alright?... I mean… you know…" she asked looking worriedly up at the ghost in her arms.

"It will be fine, just going to get it patched up," she comforted again. Probably best not to let Jazz know that Jack accidentally shot him. Jack didn't need the worried big sister attitude right now. He already felt bad enough.

As they approached the lab stairs the lights above sparked and there was an electrical whine. The ghost started to squirm and phase awkwardly through her. It really was like it was concussed in the fact that it failed. Was there some sort of cognitive center like a brain that had hit some sort of outer shell during the impact.

She cringed as she found herself hushing the ghost like it was Danny. It was but it also wasn't. Though would it really hurt that much to treat it like it right now. It was clear there was no malicious intent and it did seem to feel something.

She comforted it on the way down into the lab, mentally throwing out the 'ghosts don't have feelings research' that she should have dealt with days ago. It became more and more aware as she did. More on edge. It's grip tight but not struggling. Lights flickered and whined. The only light that didn't change was the dreaded portal that green eyes latched onto. It… he stared at it as she set him down on a workbench as far from the portal as she could get.

Danny's ghost sat on the bench, his legs swinging back and forth. They twisted between legs and half formed tail. Eyes darting around the room as the dazed state lowered. Still its eyes would always drift back to the portal. She would say the adrenaline of being taken back to a traumatic place had shook off the majority of the dazed state but ghosts didn't have adrenaline.

Maddie paused as she hunted for the first aid kit, would it even be any use. She shook her head and pulled it out anyway before returning to Danny's ghost.

She gently brushed the antiseptic over the fresh cuts in his exposed arm, it was hard to differentiate with the already mangled and burnt state of his arm. It also probably didn't matter, he was a ghost and their previous studies indicated that any flesh was just a mimic of it. That as far as ghosts went even Danny's hazmat was a mimic. That hazmat might well be his body now. Ectoplasm leaked from scratches in it just like it had from his exposed arm. As if it was his skin.

She eyed the extra glow beyond his visor, a splatter of ecto green. She hadn't expected a ghost to be able to bruise. Not that ghosts had been anything like she had expected. Cuts in the skin made sense but the equivalent of a bruise didn't. His body shouldn't have had any real structure under the skin layer that was the Hazmat. Aside from maybe something like a brain. Bruises required sub-surface vessels. Vessels he shouldn't have. There was little she could do about the bruise. It was probably as superficial as the cuts had been once she had gotten a closer look. The glass itself was intact aside from the crack he had gotten when he'd… died.

Even as she checked him over one more time she could see the plastic start to knit itself back together on the slightest of cuts. The exposed arm was slower but still healing. Ghosts were far

more elastic than humans. It was fortunate it was him who was carried off and not Jazz. He'd be healed up before long.

The clasps on his collar caught her eye, shiny and silver against the burnt black. He still had the clasps. It was a perfect mimic of the hazmat that he had been wearing. Would it move like it? Could the clasps come undone? What would that mean for the helmet? Could it come off? She reached for them and there was an audible click as she flicked it open. Danny's head tilted wondering what she was doing. What did it mean that it opened? She clicked open each one. It hadn't fallen right off. She wondered if despite the clasps it would be sealed to the neck. Just a surface imitation or maybe…

Maddie's hands shook as she settled them either side of the hazmat helmet. If this worked would there be something to see? She almost wanted to see nothing. Nothing rather than the burnt and broken dead face. Blackened and charred down to the bone. There was another part that wanted so much to see his face, his face the way it should have been.

She cringed as Danny's rough burnt hand touched hers. His hands joined hers and then they were lifting together. There was a light hiss, almost like it had been under a vacuum even though with the burnt away arm that was impossible. At the flash of singed skin of his neck she froze. Her mind realled, at war with herself. A deep breath was taken and she steeled herself. She had to know.

She lifted the helmet the rest of the way. Translucent almost pearl-like white hair fell round his face. A face that was marked with a sharp series of lichtenberg scarring that arched up his neck and across his cheek. It lanced across his eye where the crack in his visor had been. The skin around the scar was burnt but it faded out into smooth skin. Unnaturally so. His freckles were so familiar but even they glowed like little specks of starlight. Bright green eyes blinked at her, squinting in the bright lights of the examination table. His hands lowered from hers to shield them.

That was him, more him than she'd ever thought the ghost would or could look. There wasn't supposed to be an underneath. The imprint should have been surface level only. Seeing his face hurt. Maddie choked back a sob that caught his attention. The helmet dropped to the floor, Danny caused the lights to crackle and flicker out leaving his glow the only source. He shuffled back, back

and off the table into the air. Hands now covering his face in a way that was no longer about the light.

The black of the collar oozed and warped. It twisted up and wrapped around his head once again hiding his face behind the visor. The lights made an almost tentative popping noise as they flickered back on and Danny lowered his hands hesitantly as he hovered closer.

He thought he had upset her, did he think she didn't want to see. She didn't but at the same time she did. She hated seeing his face like that, dead but that face, there was something comforting about it too. That despite the expected. Despite the theory. Despite everything that should say otherwize there was enough of him there to create a face when it should have just been the hazmat and nothing else. A face she was worried he might not remember enough to recreate.

She grabbed him and pulled him close into a hug. "Its okay, I'm okay… just a little surprised. All fixed up right? We should head back up."

Danny nodded and seemed to brighten, the edges of his eyes crinkling. Maddie let him go and led him back up to the kitchen.

"Mads, how's he?" Jack asked, her blaster and the bazooka on the table in front of him.

Jack unscrewed the bazooka's casing and removed the barely spent battery. That was a bad sign.

She paused, "just a few scratches. He's healing fast so none of it was as bad as it looked by the time we got down there."

She dropped into a seat, "the ghosts?"

Jack shook his head, "gone, fled before I'd gotten the insulation. Guess that means we need to figure out something that actually works."

She sighed, she had guessed that was the case. Jack being this prepared to change batteries after only one shot meant he expected to need it again. Her own pistol was probably already changed. As he spoke the battery was waved along with his arms.

Danny watched him like a cat. Perched on the back of a chair that he had floated to. Then at the widest wave of Jack going on about how they might contain the ghosts next time he lunged. Snapped at the waving vial, his visor opening up like a mouth. Pointed broken glass like teeth in the black empty void. Said teeth clamped round the battery as Jack froze. Pulling it from his hand before retreating to the floor. Maddie stared, she couldn't help but think about how that void should have shown his face.

Maddie pulled herself quickly out of her shock. Scratches were one thing but the ecto battery exploding in his face was going to be more damaging if he broke it open wrong. She wrestled the battery away from him to a crackling whine of the electronics in the room.

"Danny! Don't eat that!" she tried to get him to let go of the battery.

The fridge growled for him, as he chewed on the battery.

"Its not safe Danno," Jack approached, hands raised placatingly.

Another whine but they were able to pull the battery from his… mouth?

Maddie sighed, “I think we might have some less volatile samples in the lab,” she slipped downstairs to lock up the pistol batteries and returned with a sample flask.

Danny guzzled it down, still without a face.

“So ghosts eat then?” Jack laughed a little watching Danny

Maddie groaned. “You saw that too right? He didn’t have a face…”

DANG

Chapter End Notes

Loook at this creature! The art is so cool! As I am writing this I am realizing that I now have three fics with Danny having some sort of broken glass/porcelain imagery. I swear I don't have a problem, I can stop reusing the imagery whenever I want... I just don't want to.

For this fic it was basically a case of I wanted to have ghost hunger but not loose the hazmat aspects for other future parts of the fic and then this idea happened.

# Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

Jazz heavy chapter this time! Also the longest chapter.

Jazz paused in front school, she took a deep breath. She needed to steel herself. Since the moment she had gotten out of her car, eyes had been on her. Gossip was flying around her, even when she couldn't hear them. Almost a month gone, of course it was going to draw attention.

She eventually forced herself to walk in, making a b-line for the school office. She didn't know what her parents had told the school about what happened but she knew that it was protocol to have a return meeting after such an event. They'd be putting things in place to support her. They'd arrange sessions with the school counselor.

"Jasmine? It's good to have you back. Should we be expecting Daniel soon too?" the secretary said looking up.

Jazz froze, tears pricking at her eyes. They were expecting Danny. They didn't know. Her parents hadn't said. What had they even said? Did the school even know there had been an accident. That realistically Jazz needed to talk with the counselor.

"Jasmine? Are you alright?"

She was crying, Jazz blinked away tears. "I… I don't know."

"That's okay dear. He can come back when he's ready. I was told to give you a light schedule today and to see Mr Lancer for some catch up work. Do you want me to sign you up to speak with the counselor?"

"Please." Jazz didn't know how it was going to work when they didn't know but she still needed it.

"Okay, take it easy today Jasmine. If you need a break then take it."

"Right."

Jazz breathed deeply to settle her nerves once outside the office. It was worse heading to class. People asking how she was, how Danny was and she couldn't answer. Not truthfully. She got through one class before having to slip into the library for most of the rest of the day.

It was there that Mr Lancer found her.

"I won't bother you for long. I know it's been a hard day. I have a couple of work packs for you and Daniel. Take your time with them though. No need if you're not up to it." He said sliding two folders across the table.

“Right… thank you…. I don’t know how much he’ll manage…” She said, awkwardly trying to explain while knowing that she can’t say anything.

What could she even say? What would happen if she said Danny was dead? Would they understand he was a ghost? What would happen to their parents? It wasn’t a good look to have not reported it.

“However much he can do is fine at the moment.” He reassured. “Maybe go home for the rest of the day, I’ll sign you out.”

“Thank you.”

She slammed the front door behind her.

“Hey Jazzy! What’s wrong? Had a bad day?” her Dad asked getting up from the sofa.

“Bad day? Bad day? Everyone kept asking about Danny! They didn’t even know he was… Why didn’t you tell them what happened!” She snapped.

“We couldn’t,” her Mom insisted.

“Why, he’s dead. Just because his ghost is still around doesn’t mean we can pretend nothing happened. They’re expecting him back at school. How’s he supposed to do that? Sooner or later they are going to notice he’s not coming back.”

“We’ll withdraw him. Say he needs special care?” Jack suggested.

“We can’t just isolate him. He needs some sort of normal. Maybe at least have Sam and Tucker…” the lights flickered at the names. She couldn’t see him but it was clear he was listening. The fact that he remembered his friends meant he needed to see them even more.

“We can’t… if people find out we risk losing what’s left of him.” her Mom defended.

“What are they going to do? He can literally go through things.”

“It's not that simple Jazz, there are people out there that will take him if they find out he’s here. People we’ve supplied. We know how they think… how we thought. They won’t understand that this is different because they don’t know Danny.” Her Mom explained, a guilty look on her face.

Jazz dropped into the seat outside the counselor’s office, her head already turning over what she was going to say. What she couldn’t say. One wrong move and she’d loose Danny. Still she needed help. They all did. Psychologically it had to be damaging to not be able to grieve properly. Danny was still there but he was different. He needed it too. She’d have to help him but her books didn’t really go into how to give therapy to your dead brother’s ghost. She couldn’t even ask about it hypothetically!

“Ah and you must be Jasmine!” Dr Spectra greeted her with a chipper tone.

Jazz plastered on her best coping smile, she knew it was shaky and fragile. She was fairly certain Dr Spectra saw right through her.

“Yes, that's me.”

“Come on in and we’ll get started,” she let Jazz into the office and paused by the thermostat dial to turn it down, “I hope you don’t mind the cold too much. I find it helps keep the mind sharp.”

“Oh um that’s fine,” she was used to the cold by now. Danny was cold. Being around Danny was cold. She was sure they were using more energy at home just to counteract the chill he produced.

Dr Spectra sat on the desk and gestured for Jazz to take a seat. She sat and looked up at Dr Spectra, still not sure what she was going to say at all.

“So where shall we start? I hear there was an incident at home?” Dr Spectra said with a pitying look. Or was that just the angle.

Jazz nodded, “there was an… accident, Danny… he got hurt,” hurt was an understatement, accident was also an understatement. She didn’t know if her parents had noticed that she had overheard them talking about that.

“Oh the poor dear, and who do you think is responsible for that?” There was something about the tone that just raised Jazz’s hackles.

Or maybe that was just her making assumptions. Jazz was probably reading in the accusation. Dr Spectra probably thought Jazz blamed herself. That was a normal problem according to her books.

“Responsible? I don’t blame myself if that’s what you’re asking,” she replied, cutting off the avenue of questioning. That wasn’t the help she needed. She wished that she could just ask for the help she needed.

Help coping with loss and the complication of Danny still being there. Even if she could say something without getting her parents into trouble for not reporting what happened to Danny how would anyone believe that he was really still around as a ghost. Well without seeing him for themselves but she didn’t think Danny was ready for strangers yet. And that wasn’t considering her parents' employers who might take him away.

“Accident implies mistake, someone had to make one,” Dr Spectra pushed.

She probably thought Jazz was lying. Being cagey about her feelings of guilt. She was avoiding saying too much so didn’t blame Dr Spectra for having that deduction. She wished she could just be honest.

Once she was home she settled at the kitchen table, it was a fight to get Danny to join her. Jazz flicked through the work packet for Danny, she glanced over to him where his glass face chewed on the old phone that he had been given to help him communicate. The thing had been bricked the moment it was in his hands. It was her old one. It at least still crackled out his speech.

She frowned, she wasn’t sure if he could handle it. His comprehension had not been good. Her parents said that not a lot of knowledge would have been copied over. That it would have been more emotional than actual memories. He could listen and talk but he didn’t really understand the point. What was the point when he wasn’t going to get any older?

She shook her head. She wasn't helping thinking like that. Just because he was different and wouldn't get older that didn't mean he couldn't benefit from learning. And maybe this would help him reach a sort of normal. Jazz tapped the table again drawing Danny's attention back to the worksheet.

"How is Danny doing? I hear he hasn't been getting through those homework packets Mr Lancer put so much effort into," Dr Spectra asked as she settled into her seat and picked up her notepad.

"He's managing, focusing on school work is hard for him right now," Jazz explained.

It was as close to the truth as she could get, though it was frustrating that she wasn't able to get Danny the help he needed to get through it.

"Oh? Maybe you should be helping him more?"

"I've been helping him every night," Jazz insisted, maybe a little sharply.

She took a deep breath, Dr Spectra was just trying to help. She didn't know how bad Danny's situation was. She didn't know how hard helping him was. How hard it was to keep him focused, especially once it got dark. Jazz many times had to drag him from the roof. He still loved the stars, she was grateful that he hadn't gone any higher than the roof.

"If you worked harder he would be coping better."

That hurt. Both of them were trying their best.

"Your parents are scientists, right?" Dr Spectra asked as she flicked through her notes.

"Yes, they are." Jazz replied wondering where she was going with this.

"Where do they work?" She looked down at her, the question curious.

"Oh in the basement actually. They have a lab down there," It wasn't like it was a secret. Pretty much common knowledge. She'd be able to find out with just a question to pretty much any of the teachers.

"Isn't that a bit reckless of them?" She didn't look surprised, "not exactly the safest thing. Oh and poor Danny's accident was down there, right? Honestly, good parents should be more careful."

Jazz frowned, did she already know. What was she even trying to do? Did she still think Jazz blamed them and was just trying to get an admission before trying to help her through it? Dr Spectra was the expert, no matter how irritating, she had to know what she was doing. Maybe it wasn't Dr Spectra, maybe it was the fact that Jazz couldn't tell her the truth of what happened. How could she really know how to help if Jazz kept lying?

"It wasn't their fault," Jazz insisted.

Dr Spectra raised an eyebrow, "really? I doubt they had nothing to do with it. All the staff have been talking about it. They say your father isn't exactly the smartest man."

Jazz saw red. Her Dad wasn't stupid. Easily distracted, yes but not stupid. He knew how to manage his distractions. He wasn't a danger in the lab. She'd seen the safety level in the lab, the only reason the incident had happened was sabotage.

"He's not stupid! It wasn't his fault!" She yelled.

"Oh dear, Jasmine breathe. I didn't say he was stupid, though it can't be easy with others thinking that. Thinking that it was his fault," Dr Spectra soothed her hands up.

Had Jazz misunderstood. Had she really only been bringing up a rumor that she thought Jazz might have heard to try and deal with the hurt from it. Surely she could have phrased that better.

"If that bothered you so much I can't imagine how you'd feel about what they are saying about little Danny," it was so off hand.

Jazz scowled, anger still simmering, "what are they saying?" she shouldn't even be humoring this. It was terrible counseling. Dr Spectra shouldn't be bringing this up unprompted but she had to know what they were saying about Danny. Danny didn't deserve anyone talking crap about him.

"Oh I shouldn't…" she didn't linger long, "however, surely Danny shouldn't have been playing around down there. Not the smartest thing to be doing but then again teenage boys will be teenage boys."

"Danny wasn't playing around! He was helping them, he's been studying with them for years," Jazz snapped.

"And they agreed? You didn't stop them? Surely you would know that's not safe. I thought you had more sense than that," Dr Spectra looked at her with a pointed look.

Jazz's eye twitched, "MY parents knew what they were doing! Danny knew what he was doing! It wasn't either of their faults!"

"Maybe you distracted them? Him even? You do talk a lot," Spectra needled.

"I… I wasn't even down there!" Jazz gave an exasperated shout.

"If you'd been down there maybe he wouldn't have gotten hurt," Spectra said not even looking fazed by the shouting.

Jazz stood sharply not even caring that the chair clattered to the floor, "that's it, we're done! I'm sick of this. I don't know what your goal is 'Dr' but it sure isn't helping."

"Jasmine? What are you talking about? I'm here to help," Spectra hopped to her feet with a clack of her heels.

"Then you're not very good at your job," Jazz bit as she slammed the door behind her.

She stormed through the corridor, each step an echoing stomp through quiet after school halls. That woman was completely unprofessional. A counselor wasn't meant to behave like that. At first she thought she was just misunderstanding 'Dr' Spectra's methods but now it just seemed like the woman just wanted to kick her down further instead of lifting her up. Was she even a qualified doctor?

By the time she reached her locker to grab her bag tears of anger were streaming hot down her face. A strangely welcome change from the grief based tears that she had been dealing with so much. She was looking forward to the safety of her car to calm down before driving home. She slammed her locker door.

“Hey Jazz, wait up!” she flinched at the sound of Tucker’s voice.

She couldn’t face them, not now. She hated lying to them. They were Danny’s friends, he needed them but she couldn’t. How did someone even tell someone else that their friend was dead but not. She kept going, trying to ignore the hastening footsteps squeaking on the laminate.

“Jazz! Stop avoiding us! You can’t keep doing this!” Sam snapped, grabbing her shoulder and forcing her to turn round.

“Yeah we just want to know how…” Tucker trailed off, “Jazz, you alright? Did something happen? Danny’s okay, right?”

Jazz looked down, she couldn’t look him in the eyes, “I’m… fine…” she winced, that was a Danny line, “he’s fine, just a bad session with Spectra.”

“Ugh, shrinks,” Sam rolled her eyes, “they’re all a bunch of quacks.”

“Maybe we should walk with you to your car to make sure you’re okay,” Tucker started and then quickly finished, “and then we can come over and see Danny.”

Jazz had been about to say yes. She’d wanted the company. She paused, her mouth open. He’d been trying to trick her into agreeing to something she’d been avoiding. She didn’t have any right to be angry at him. He was trying to trick her, badly she might add and meanwhile she was lying to them and avoiding the Danny situation.

“Sorry… you can’t… he’s not up to…” she awkwardly tried to brush them off.

“No! I’m sick of hearing that! That’s what your parents keep saying. I want to hear it from him,” Sam shouted.

“Sam…” Tucker started.

“No! I don’t care how upset she is Tucker! She’s not the only one dealing with all this! What about Danny? He’s not answering his phone! He could at least text or call!”

“He can’t, his phone broke,” it was the only thing that was easy to say. Easy because she wasn’t exactly lying to them. Broken was an understatement. It had burnt up in the portal along with everything else.

“It's been almost a month Jazz, he can get another phone! Hell I’ll buy him one if he just uses it!” Sam pulled down the weak excuse, “you can’t keep doing this, all of you. I want to see Danny and if you don’t do something I’ll find my own way!”

“I… I’ll see what I can do,” Jazz surrendered, she doubted her parents would agree but Danny needed some sort of normal and she couldn’t let Sam and Tucker face this without some warning.

# Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

Oh boy was this a hard chapter to write! Enjoy some Danny POV!

Fizzt fizzt, the old screen crackled flickering with sparks of white in the black between his fingers. He chewed on its corners. Night, like night. He frowned, eyes cast towards the window. Blocked, hide, Mom said he had to hide. There was still light escaping through the gaps. Not night yet. He was bored. Night meant stars. Not that he could see. Hiding. Sneak a peek while everyone's eyes were closed. He grumbled a bunch of crackles as he curled around Jazz before starting up a more constant rumbling. She crackled back. Better. Leaving soon. Miss having her.

He startled, loud chime. Door. Guests. Hide even more. Mom said. Worried about him. They'd take him. Take Jazz. Then he couldn't keep safe. Jazz untangled herself from him. He whined and flickered out of sight.

Mom got there first. Guest? Unfamiliar voice. Sharp cold that stuck in his visor. There was something in his house. Looked human. Wasn't.

"Dr Spectra? What are you doing here?" Jazz asked. Irritated. Fake.

"Oh you must be the school counselor?" Mom started.

"I'm here to check up on your brother. A wellness check considering how you yourself are doing." False smile. False cheer. He agreed with Jazz, she was irritating.

"He's fine." Jazz replied, firm. Want gone.

"What Jazz means is Danny is fine but not really well enough for visitors." Mom was more polite, worry.

"I would like to see that for myself." She pushed her way into the house as if she had been let in.

"I'd rather you not!" Jazz snapped. "I'm not having you talk to him like you've been talking to me!"

"I don't know what you mean. I've been helping you. You just don't understand that." she waved her off. Sour, liar.

"I think I understand very well." growled Jazz, he almost expected a flicker.

"Maybe we should get the authorities involved if you are going to refuse me?"

"Ah there's no need for that… I'm sure we can work something out. Another time though, really Danny isn't ready for…" Mom tried.

“It is rather neglectful to refuse letting a traumatized child talk to a therapist.”

Red, rage. Snapped thread. “Like hell you’re a therapist!” Jazz snapped.

He was angry too. Head hurt, sharp cold stuck. Building. This one had hurt Jazz. That wasn’t allowed. But he had to hide. Hold it in. He had to hold back. He growled a low crackling growl. Sharp cold slipped out. Too loud, too obvious. A sharp hiss, like boiling water. It curled in the air, too slow to fade. The threat’s eyes fixed on him. No through him. Still invisible. Still hidden.

“Oh what was that?” She stepped forward.

Jazz grabbed her arm. “Nothing, just an incense burner.”

“You really are a terrible liar.” She smirked, pulling her arm free and knocking Jazz to the ground.

Not accident. Intentional. “Oh, oh no. I am sorry. Mr and Mrs Fenton. I am concerned your daughter might be smoking. Leaving a lit one like that is such a fire hazard.”

Jazz bubbled with anger. Fear, from his family. Satisfied feeling. Not his. Someone else consuming. No, those were his. She didn’t get to do that. He didn’t even get to do that. They didn’t like it. He stopped. Safe feelings only! Not allowed. Not human. Not like family. No need to hide. Need to defend his.

Danny charged as she held out a hand to help Jazz up. False. Pretend. Would hurt her again. He lunged between them, returning to visibility with a vicious crackling. Aura expanding. Defensive, protective, angry.

“Danny” Jazz hissed.

The intruder’s face cracked with a toothy grin. Dangerous. “So this is the dirty little secret that you’ve been hiding.” A feeling of victory. “How disgusting that you keep him around like that, no better than just parading his corpse around really.”

“How dare you!” Mom snapped, her body lowered. Tense. Ready. Attack intended.

“He’s more… he’s still here. It's not disgusting.” Jazz defended.

Her eyebrows raised. “Wait? You’re ghost hunters, are you really keeping the little ghost like a pet?” crackling laughter.

“Danno’s not a pet and we… we’re not hunters, not anymore. Right Mads!” Dad said.

“Ghost scientists then.” she waved her hand. “Maybe it was intentional? You have two children, it makes sense really. Kill one and then whala you have a ghost to study. Not like you need two.”

Anger, rage. “Never.” Dad growled.

“How dare you insinuate that.” Mom reached for her. Fast. Violent. Impact… no impact.

Her fist passed through. Not human

“You! You’re a ghost! That’s why you kept it cold,” Jazz said with a sharp woosh of air, gas. Shock, bitter, anger.

“Wow, you would think the child of ghost hunters would figure that out faster,” Spectra teased unfazed as pistols were turned on her, “Oh well I suppose there’s no more need to play nice.”

She shrugged and then her skin seemed to unravel, peeling away against the licking of black flames that ignited across her body. She seemed to expand. The room darkened. Shadows blending. No, she couldn’t do that. This was his house. His space. It should bend to him not her.

“Bertrand, feel free to join the fun.” she called out.

Another intruder faded in. Shorter, shifting. Leopard. Danny growled, he’d missed the second one.

“About time. I have been so bored.” He grinned as the dark swallowed him and the rest of the room. Leaving them only what Danny’s aura could fight off. He flared. Family shivered, he hated that.

Danny growled defensively at the dark behind them, tail swishing. Hovering close to his family. Green shot over his shoulders into nebulous dark. Too dark. Not night. No stars. Dark flames flickered and reached out snatching at Jazz’s legs. Would be easier if she didn’t have those. She still needed them. He snarled, pulling her away, snapping at the black. Was it edible? Could he deal with it that way? Smelt like batteries. He wasn’t allowed batteries. He held her close, guarding. Safe.

“You really think that little monster is a good thing to have around your still living daughter.” The voice echoed out of the dark. Laughing. Smug.

“Danno’s a Fenton! He won’t hurt her! He’s a good ghost!” Dad snapped back, right. Danny wouldn’t.

“He might be harmless now but it's only a matter of time.” The green coloured leopard that was Bertrand leapt from the shadows lunging at them. “Just look at Bertrand here. Look at me even” Dad’s shots went wide as he scrambled to dodge the ghost. Red eyes hung behind Mom and clawed hands reached out. Danny lunged, snapping, unwrapping from Jazz. Shouldn’t, shouldn’t. Bad. Couldn’t be in two places.

Hands pulled back. Mom shot blindly into the dark. He curled round her defensively. Too many to protect. Too many places to be.

“Pathetic, you aren’t really that good at this whole ghost hunting thing.” Spectra taunted from the shadows. “Missing someone?”

Danny whipped round. Mom, Dad… no Jazz. Jazz was gone. Stolen. He screeched. Or tried, it came out weirdly quiet. Just the phone speaker. She’d stolen the house.

“Give her back!” Dad started blasting wildly. Danny growled and bit at the shadows with glass teeth.

“Some parents you are. Letting your daughter get taken so easily” Bertrand taunted slipping out of the shadows.

“Back off! Give her back” Dad bellowed, blasting at the ghost.

Green seared and Bertrand snarled, leaping back into the shadow at the hit.

“And miss this tasty misery? Not happening.”

Danny resisted the urge to chase. He flitted between his parents, staying close and growling like grinding gears. He wanted to save Jazz but that would mean leaving someone unprotected. If he stuck close to Mom then Dad wasn't safe. The same in reverse. He couldn't stay near both. Not when the two in the shadows were driving them apart with attacks.

He was knocked from the air by Bertrand's pounce. He struggled and bit at the ghost pinning him down. The green tasted like the green he was both allowed and not allowed.

"Speaking of tasty, this ones pretty fresh. It's been a while since we've had a new ghost." Bertrand sniffed.

Mom blasted him off with a well aimed shot, "stay away from him."

Danny bolted up, darting over to her. Clinging close. His head swiveled till he found Dad. Good, no one else had been stolen while he was distracted. He couldn't let that happen again.

They kept being pushed back, up the stairs. Shots firing. Danny hated. Hated feeling helpless. Couldn't grab. The intruders mostly were too quick to bite. Useless. Unable to fight. Mom's blaster beeped.

"Jack? Please tell me you left some more weapons up here?" she asked. Urgent, hopeful.

He shook his head, "not with Danno, some in the ops center I think."

"Then we need to get there."

Mom made a break for the upstairs. Dad followed behind blasting. Danny hated being stuck in the middle. He wanted to help. To protect. The ladder dropped.

"Trying to escape? Honestly, what kind of parents are you, abandoning your daughter?"

"We're not!" Jack snapped.

"Jack, don't listen to her!" Mom yelled blasting where she hung on the ladder.

"Right, right. We'll get the weapons and then rescue Jazzy." He clambered up and Danny clung to him defensively while it was harder for him to protect himself.

Mom slammed down the hatch after them. Danny was comforted by the static fuzz from nearby speakers and the light. He didn't flicker that. That would scare his family. Even with that comfort he didn't leave the hatch. Floating back and forth as Mom and Dad rummaged for weapons. Batteries. Anything. He wanted to go after Jazz. Not wait. But wait was needed.

It took far too long for Danny's liking. He was grumbling frustratedly by the time Mom reopened the hatch. A snowstorm of static background noise filling the ops center. The bottom of the ladder was completely lost in the dark. Mom shot a few testing blasts into the dark. Nothing shifted. Nothing reacted. He whined as she started down. Shot down after her. Curling round her and casting a small light. Not safe.

Dad stepped onto the ladder. Dark shifted. Danny panicked. Wrong. Mistake. Shouldn't have left. The ops center went dark and clawed hands pulled him back with a yelp.

"Jack!" Mom blasted into the opening hoping to hit spectra.

“Woops there goes the oaf. Bet you think you’ve got a better chance without him. How heartless.”

“Shut up.” Maddie growled.

“You can’t really not think that. He was pulling you down. Loud, obnoxious and incompetent. Everyone knows you’re far more capable.”

“We’re a team.” She defended.

“And yet alone you could just leave.”

The dark vanished, pulling back like it was peeling from the walls. There was the stairs back to the living room, clear as day. There was a silence. Danny snarled. Trick, lie. Wouldn’t leave Jazz and Dad anyway. Mom kept her weapon drawn as she approached the stairs. The way to the lab was still wrapped in shadow. Danny clung close as they approached. One left he could still protect.

“Please don’t let them have taken them through the portal.” She muttered.

Danny growled, not through. He hoped not. Portal was bad. Portal was dangerous. Portal hurt. Other side was curious but dangerous. Like stars. Interesting but not a good idea to try and touch. He curled round her as she stopped in front of the door.

She shifted trying to get out of his tangle. “Danny no, you can’t. You can’t come with me. I can’t lose you too.”

“Have to. Need to help. Keep safe.” Danny growled back with static.

“No, no. Don’t worry I’ve got this. You’ll be safe up here and I’ll be back before you know it.”

“Lie, need help. Not safe here either.” He whined.

Mom nervous, anxious. Fear. Glanced around. Sigh, “Okay, fine. I can’t leave you here either. She’d just pick us off the moment we split up. Stay close… and Danny if this goes wrong leave. Get help somehow but don’t get yourself… caught.”

“Help protect.” He grumbled.

He didn’t want to leave. He wanted to help. If she could lie then so could he. He nodded. He’d help. He’d protect. He’d watch her back as best he could. He wanted a better weapon than biting though.

Danny clung close to her as she descended into the lab. His glow barely piercing the dark. Mom scanned the dark for anything distinct. He couldn’t even see the portal. Shadows clung tight, not like the small bubble they’d been given before. All a game. Just toying with them.

“Foolish.” Spectra laughed. “You could have left. You could have saved yourself and yet you walk into the lion’s den to save them. How stupid.”

Bertrand lunged out of the shadows knocking Mom down the stairs. Clattering. Painful tumble. Thump. Danny screeched and rushed at the dark. He couldn’t see her. He heard the whine and zap of Mom’s pistol.

“Useless. Should have fled while you could. You know what that means for him right?” Bertrand chuckled a growl somewhere in the dark.

“He’s so fresh, just a few months. Oh how tender he’ll be.” claws grasped at him. “And how sweet your misery will be to see it happen.”

He lashed out at the grasping hands, his hands tingling. Burning cold. There was a flash and the intruder hissed. He launched himself in the direction of the hiss. Mom shot green blasts from somewhere. He had to help her. He had to fight. He caught sight of Bertrand. Too many limbs. Half way between the leopard he had been and something with far more legs. Too many eyes and insect like. He hit something. Sticky and tangling.

# Chapter 10

Chapter Notes

We finally get to some Vlad. He'll be more involved in the second fic in the series so don't worry you'll see more of his scheming.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Vlad had been waiting for this day for years, the day he would finally get his revenge. He couldn't help the smug smirk on his face. Every step was planned. Nothing would go wrong. There wasn't anything he hadn't considered. Not like the last time. Nothing had happened. Apparently he'd acted a little too late in that fit of rage. A little too far into the portal's production. A little bit of insidious code that would never trigger because Jack would never tidy up his prior work. This time would be different.

The reunion plan had been in progress ever since the idea of having one was even approached by some other alumni. It was the perfect opportunity. He would have Jack and Maddie in a space completely under his control. He would overshadow Jack and humiliate him for everyone to see. Then he'd see about doing away with the fool. There would be alcohol and well it wouldn't be improbable for the man to go for a fatal car ride. Of course Vlad would be there to pick up the pieces with Maddie. The children were of little consequence. He'd take them for Maddie's sake but well, if they fell too much on Jack's side of the gene pool a scholarship to some far off boarding school would keep them out of his hair.

He had each step of the day planned down to the moment. He even stood by the door awaiting the arrival of the pair. However they didn't. Jack had been so excited to come early to reconnect and yet they'd not arrived early. Vlad frustratedly threw out many mental pages of his plan that involved getting quiet time to reconnect with Maddie while sowing some seeds of descent and interest before finally offing Jack. He'd have to spend more time after the deed was done. It was fine. He could adapt.

At the reunion itself he eyed the clock as his old classmates tried to talk to him. He doubted many honestly wanted to reconnect. They were after his money. His power from said money. Or something else. Why would anyone talk to him otherwise? It wasn't like they had before. Each hour that went by had him clenching a fist tighter and trying not to show that growing anger on his face. Hide his hand in a pocket where it couldn't crack his wine glass. Where were they?

Jack was like an over affectionate puppy. Stupid and bad at personal space. There was no way he would have missed the reunion intentionally. He might have forgotten but that was why Vlad had specifically also invited Maddie. She wouldn't have forgotten. Then why? Why were they not there? If they had to cancel there would be no way the polite, sweet and considerate Maddie would have not at least called to let him know.

That night once everyone had gone home he let that rage out. All that planning and effort wasted. It had to be Jack's fault. Maybe he had been given the one basic responsibility of calling him and then forgot that. He threw his more physical plans at the fire. They caught quickly and he had to pause

his rampage on the office to keep the stray papers from lighting the bookcases. He took a deep breath. Maybe there was a way to salvage this. Maddie would be so apologetic about missing the event. Jack's downfall wouldn't be so public but he could still tear them apart and off Jack. Revenge could still be his.

He waited till morning before picking up the phone. Until he could speak with some level of forced calm. He hoped that it would be Maddie answering. He didn't want to deal with Jack's loud incessant apologies for a situation he caused. Even after the wait he didn't think he could keep his cool if he had to talk to Jack.

The phone rang, it rang for a long time before finally cutting to voicemail. He slammed it down without leaving a message. Not even getting to the beep. Definitely couldn't handle talking to Jack.

He stewed for a while longer before trying again. Maybe they were just working in that ridiculous basement of theirs and couldn't hear the phone. He glanced at the clock. The children might answer this time. They wouldn't be in the basement he assumed. One of them could get Maddie. He tried to remember what he knew of them. A boy and a girl. The girl would probably be easier to deal with. She no doubt would be intelligent and cooperative. He dialed the number. It rang.

Click, "Fentonworks!" Jack's recorded voice bellowed, "We're either in the lab or hunting a GHOST right now! Leave a message and we'll get back to you!"

He scowled and hung up again, wincing at the loud, obnoxious recording of Jack. The children are probably out. He can wait. He's been waiting 20 years, a few more hours would be fine. The phone cracked in his grip.

Another phone and a few hours later when surely the family would be sitting down to eat their dinner he called again. His fingers tapped on the table. If the wood was softer he would have left small divots with the intensity. There was a small part of him that worried. Not for Jack but that once again they wouldn't answer. It wondered if there had been another reason for why they hadn't shown up for the reunion. As the phone rang on he couldn't help but feel a certain dread. Had something happened? He remembered that previous, spur of the moment, fit of rage attempt. Maybe this was a blessing in disguise? If he'd already offed Jack or at least hospitalised him then there was less to do. Not as sweet as if he had been there as witness but he could still swoop in and pick up the pieces.

The phone clicked over to voicemail again.

Surely a concerned visit from a friend after they missed the reunion wouldn't look too out of place. He hung up the phone and headed for his car. It wouldn't do to arrive there too early after the reunion.

As Vlad drove through Amity Park the obnoxiously obvious structure that was Fentonworks started to become visible even streets away. The rooftop abomination of technology was a marker of just how close he was to getting everything he wanted. As he got closer he couldn't help but feel something was off. The imposing aura of a ghostly presence. Cold, intimidating and clearly saying for any other ghosts to stay away. A taste of fear the closer he got.

The streets were mostly clear and nobody lingered long near the house. He pulled up and brushed off the feeling before heading for the door. The ghost was clearly trying to take control of the area but it was nothing in comparison to him. He knocked.

There was a long silence. He couldn't help but notice the curtains were drawn in every window. He knocked again, louder. Still nothing. Maybe they were just out. He slammed a fist against the door.

"Looking for those loony scientists?" A man asked pausing on the street. He shivered and muttered. "Jeas this place gives me the right heebie jeebies."

Vlad turned putting a false smile on his face. "Ah yes I am. You wouldn't happen to know where they are?"

The man shrugged. "Haven't seen them out much lately, hell I think I've only seen the daughter. Surprisingly quiet that lot since the accident."

"Accident? What kind of accident?" Vlad asked, that could mean anything. He needed to know how bad things were.

"Hell if I know." The man shrugged, he glanced uncomfortably at the house before walking off.

Vlad looked at the house, the house was the source of the aura. Had they found an actual ghost? Or had the 'accident' been more fatal than the man thought. His fist clenched. Fear curled in him. Something happening to Jack he was fine with if a little disappointed over missing it. If something had happened to the children he didn't mind. However hearing nothing meant that something might have happened to Maddie and that, that scared him.

He sped off, backing up rather more haphazardly than he usually would. His mind kept running through worst case scenarios. Both of them being in the hospital because of the planned malfunction. A worse state if there had been an explosion, Jack could have made it worse easily. The whole lab having gone up in flames. Exploded with no time to escape. The house gutted in one violent explosion taking the whole family with it. All because he messed with the portal without fully planning things out. He parked just around the corner. The window left open as he transformed and phased invisibly through the roof.

The house was dark and unnaturally quiet for a house that Jack Fenton of all people lived in. It was possible that they just were not home but the state of the house threw that into doubt. Inside lay a chaotic scene, the furniture tossed about and broken. Fabric torn and wood splintered. It wasn't the fiery explosion that he had feared. A ghost attack instead. It soothed his anxieties. He hadn't accidentally harmed Maddie. However the lack of sign of Maddie was concerning. If the ghost had been bested she would not have left the house like this.

The living room wasn't much better, no it was worse. Sticky ectoplasm splattered the room like the toxic green had been blasted blindly. Walls were marked with singes. The lab door had been pulled fully off its reinforced hinges. The door was almost completely replaced with ectoplasmic webbing.

He burnt it away, his nose crumpling at the ozone smell of burning ecto. He hoped he'd find nothing down there. That the pair were now at the hospital or something because Jack was injured, just Jack he hoped on the injured front.

The lab was not empty. It was lit by the toxic green light of a portal. A portal that shouldn't have been active without being set off by his sabotage. His stomach dropped a little. No it had to have been Jack. Wiring was Jack's job. Maddie wouldn't have cleaned up after him, right?

The glowing figures of two ghosts were silhouetted by the portal. A figure shifting shapes between spider and a short more human figure drew his attention first. Then to the one that was more

shadow than anything else, drinking in the fear and misery that clung to the air.

The emotions were thick in the air. A constant refreshing flow. His eyes fell on the dark cocoons of webs. Four of them. He would have cursed if he didn't think he would have been heard. He couldn't leave and risk Maddie having been in one.

He slipped over to the nearest one, he hoped that this one was Maddie. He'd rescue her and then when they were forced to flee from the ghosts attacking then he would still look like the hero while leaving Jack to his fate. He charged a little ecto energy around his hand, using the heat to cut through the threads of the cocoon.

A large weight slumped against him as it tore open. He let the energy vanish from his hand instantly. He stifled a frustrated groan at the sight of Jack's ridiculously bright orange jumpsuit. The oaf however was not so silent as he stirred.

"Vladdie?" Jack asked with a tone of confusion in his voice.

He scowled, "Jack, please tell me Maddie isn't here."

"I don't know… she got me first."

"Of course she did."

"What's this? An old man playing pretend? You really think you can save them, Mr hero?" He knew that voice.

Vlad scowled. "I should have known." Spectra. It wasn't his first encounter with the woman. He detested her.

"Give my family back," Jack yelled as he charged into the fight with a hastily and foolishly grabbed broken piece of metal.

Vlad scowled, he could leave the oaf to his fate. That would mean leaving Maddie. Jack however could serve as a distraction. It was really all he was good for.

"You really think you can stop me this time, weakened… broken. You've already failed your children once." Spectra taunted.

He slipped to the next cocoon using Jack's wild attacks as cover. The man didn't stand a chance but as long as he kept them busy long enough for Vlad to find Maddie then Vlad could let Jack die without revealing his powers. He seared open the pod and there was a moment of relief at the flash of ginger hair as the occupant fell. He caught her. Her long hair cascaded over her face. That wasn't Maddie. He huffed, at least Maddie would be grateful for the rescue of her daughter.

"What do you think you're doing?" He heard Spectra far too close for his liking.

So much for Jack being a good distraction. A blast seared towards him and instinctively he raised a small shield. The girl was unconscious so it didn't matter.

"Oh what's this? The old man's a freak!" He scowled, like she didn't already know that.

"Shut up!" he hissed, if she said more it could become a problem.

“You know what they are right? Why would you fight for them? They’re ghost hunters. They’ll hate you. Show you no mercy. What a fool you are.” Spectra taunted in his ear, trying to feed off of the misery she had once pulled out of him.

He growled and blasted her away, her shadowy body gaining a bloody green tear in her side as she was thrown back. He wasn’t fighting for them. Maddie was all who he was interested in. She wouldn’t find out and it wouldn’t ever matter.

Two more pods, close together. 50/50 chance between Maddie and Jack’s son. A green blast seared past, Jack had found a working blaster. Predictably his aim was still terrible. He hoisted the girl over his shoulder before placing her down to break open the next pod.

Maddie stumbled from the pod, she gripped his shirt for stability. There was blood in her hair. “Madeline? Are you alright? We have to get out of here. Jack can only keep them busy so long.”

Even though he had thrown his plans out long ago this impromptu one was going reasonably close to the plan that he was making up as he went. Maddie gained her bearings quickly and found a weapon somewhere on her person to blast the spider that had Jack pinned.

“Vlad? What… never mind.” She shoved a blaster into his hand. “No time, we’ll talk later. Guard Jazz.”

She charged in because of course she would. No matter how much of a useless oaf Jack was, no matter how much of this was probably his fault, Maddie just wasn’t the type to leave someone to fight alone. He loved her but he really found that nobility frustrating right now.

Spectra hovered in front of him with a smirk. “You know she’ll always choose him. Why even stay? Why protect the child? She’s just as much him as she is her, why protect her.”

“I know your tricks.” He knew what she was trying to do.

“True but can you really fend me off with just a blaster while keeping your dirty little secret?” She lunged with claws drawn. She slashed and grabbed for the girl.

There was a sharp electrical whine, and the lights flickered on. Bright and blinding. They exploded in a screech that seemed so much more emotive than anything electronic should ever have. The final pod exploded in a gorey green mess. He winced knowing that could have been Maddie only moments ago. There was a streaking flare of light as another ghost entered the chaos. Green star-like blasts flew. A stray green blast, the origin he didn’t quite catch threw Spectra away from them. Well aimed, probably Maddie.

The third ghost shot round like a comet, the attacks indiscriminate. A rage swamped over everything else in the lab. Spectra’s currently not so little assistant screeched as blasts bit into spidery legs. It rippled and shifted, smaller and smaller. Maddie pulled Jack out of the way unfortunately. She placed a few more choice shots before it retreated through the lab portal.

“Bertrand! Get back here!” Spectra screeched.

“Who is in trouble now?” Vlad couldn’t help but taunt.

She was surrounded, it would appear her newest underling wasn’t too pleased with her for some reason. Honestly he wasn’t sure why the shifter stuck with her so long.

“Hmpf this isn’t over but I suppose the misery will only be more delicious when this whole mess falls down around you.” she waved it off like she was doing them a favour and fled through the ceiling.

“Hey! You don’t get to run from Jack Fenton like that!” The oaf bellowed as he thundered up the stairs. Only pausing for a moment. “Thanks for the save V-man, we owe you!”

Vlad scowled, Jack was not who he wanted a thank you from. Maddie stood on guard, the third ghost floating above. Of course Jack would leave the current threat to chase after one already probably long gone. Said current threat was apparently not content with fighting off its previous allies. It shot towards Maddie. She didn’t react. She wasn’t going to be fast enough to stop it. Was it her head injury?

He pushed her aside and raised the pistol ready to shoot.

“Vlad! Wait!” Maddie staggered and threw herself between them.

The ghost behind her whined and the lights flickered. It curled round her. It didn’t attack and he couldn’t help the confusion that must have been clear on his face. Was this really Maddie on good terms with a ghost?

Chapter End Notes

By Spectra, at least for now! She'll be back later for sure. Jazz still needs to get some professional revenge.

# Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"He's not with them," Maddie said softly.

If she had suddenly sprouted a second head Vlad wouldn't have been much more surprised than he was right then. Surprised and confused but with a spark of hope that he'd long since crushed. There was his Maddie defending a ghost. He couldn't help but wonder if all the hate had been Jack all along. That if he'd told her then maybe she'd have still been there for him back then. That as long as he could hide his intentions and actions against Jack that she'd be okay with his ghostly nature.

She gave him a hopeful smile, how he'd missed seeing her smile, "I know this is confusing but well… maybe we should go talk about all this upstairs."

Her smile was shaky and she glanced between him and the ghost behind her. The one that clung to her back, "pop upstairs and we'll be right up," she said to it softly.

The ghost shook its head and stared with its bright green eyes at Vlad, he wasn't even sure if the lamp-like eyes could even blink. He noted the bulky hazmat suit, maybe this was the ghost of someone Maddie had known. Something he couldn't put his fingers on about the whole situation was bothering him.

Maddie sighed, "Fine we'll all go together, but Vlad… I'm warning you now. Do not test me with him."

Vlad blinked out of his unintended staring contest with the clearly young ghost, "Right, yes…" that determined tone was familiar. He'd not heard her stern tone in a long time. If she was that protective of the ghost then maybe she would be willing to leave Jack for the sake of the ghost.

He followed her up the stairs, the girl in her arms and the ghost curling around the pair. He was expecting the ghost to vanish if Jack was upstairs. Jack hadn't interacted with it during the fight and probably assumed the same as him as much as he hated the idea of sharing a thought process with the oaf. Jack probably didn't know of Maddie's little ghost ally. If he did there was no way he'd be on her side about it. He always was an act first, think second kind of man. Maddie was probably expecting the oaf to have left the house chasing Spectra. If Vlad was fortunate the Jack wouldn't be back.

Jack was stomping around, righting chairs. Clearly Spectra had gotten away and he'd given up the chase. The young ghost didn't vanish and Vlad braced himself for the firing of wild blasts from Jack's terrible aim. Worse it slipped out from behind Maddie to dart over to Jack. The little ghost was apparently as foolish as Jack himself.

Jack didn't shoot, he startled a little as the ghost brushed against him and settled round his shoulders. The man grinned like a fool and took Maddie's daughter from her to set on the sofa. The girl was beginning to come round. Jack's lack of reaction didn't make sense. Maddie being swayed by a ghost he could believe but Jack? Jack was far too stuck in his stupid ways to work out he was wrong about anything.

He frowned sitting in the chair that if he wasn't able to just phase through would leave him feeling rather surrounded. The other arm chair that was currently empty faced him. The sofa that Jasmine was on was on one side and the other the TV closed the gap.

Vlad stared at the small ghost that had now settled on the back of Jack' armchair, the large man sitting in front as if there wasn't a ghost there at all. Vlad couldn't help but notice the lack of wariness around it. As if it was normal to be there. He watched as Jack passed up an ecto capsule that he extracted from the ecto pistol he had used during the fight. The ghost chewed on it, its face plate splitting like a jagged mouth of broken glass.

"Jack!" Maddie hissed scoldingly, "what did I say about giving him those? What if he accidentally blasts himself."

"I know Mads but he needs the boost, we all do!"

"That's what the flasks in the lab… oh… nevermind. I guess it's fine this time."

Vlad had to wonder if the ghost was somehow influencing them. Maddie was too strong willed for that but Jack and maybe Jasmine but that still didn't make much sense. Maddie was a strong and protective sort, she wouldn't have allowed the ghost to influence her children. Children. There was only one. How had they not noticed? Maybe they were being influenced. Influenced to not even have realized that the boy had probably died when the last pod exploded.

"Maddie dear? Where is…" he paused trying to remember the boy's name, "Where is Daniel?"

The family froze, a long silence filling the air. Jasmine looked to her parents while both of them wouldn't meet Vlad's eyes. Maddie looked like her mind was ticking away, choosing carefully what to say. Jack however had the world written on his face. The man was not subtle. Though it was the first time he'd seen Jack really lose that boisterous energy. Even fighting the ghost it had been there and now? Nothing. It was quite clear something had happened. They didn't even seem shocked. Something before the incident downstairs or no doubt Maddie would still be down there trying to dig whatever was left of Daniel out of the webs. Jack was the first to break, his eyes darting to the ghost. It didn't take a genius to catch on.

It explained a few things. Why they were so comfortable around the ghost. "Oh, I see. Maddie, I am so sorry. What happened?"

The ghost hissed with static as he asked the question. Green lamp-like eyes were on him. If he was a normal human he supposed he would feel threatened by the increased intensity of the aura that made the family shiver. The fact that the ghost didn't try to blast him for the taboo question made it clear that the ghost knew it was outclassed. Just to be sure little Daniel knew his place he pulsed his own aura. Far more controlled, hidden from the family under Daniel's own but that only made his superiority clearer.

"The portal…" Jack started.

"An accident? Surely not again. Please tell me you learnt from that mistake Jack." He didn't hide his frustration or anger well. Had the oaf really learnt nothing.

Jack winced.

“It wasn’t his fault. Someone sabotaged the portal. It turned on with Danny inside it despite all our safety protocols.” Maddie defended.

“Stupid thing was even unplugged.” Jack grumbled.

Vlad was surprised to hear Jack call what should have been his dream invention stupid. How the guilt the man felt must have been delicious to Spectra. It was vindicating to finally see him regret his idiotic behavior. Vlad might have laid the groundwork for the accident through his sabotage but the fault still lay with Jack. If Jack had been more careful 20 years ago. If Jack had been more careful even in the modern day he’d have noticed the sabotage. If Jack hadn’t been so foolish to hand off dangerous work to a child. If it were not for Jack then Daniel wouldn’t be a ghost. Vlad did feel a little guilt but not in the same way. He was sorry for the hurt this would have caused Maddie. He wished his target had been the one dead but Daniel couldn’t have been much of a loss. Even a ghost it was clear to see there was far too much Jack in that child.

“Sabotage, who would even do that?”

“That’s the problem, we don’t know.” Maddie said, shaking her head. “There’s no evidence of who at all.”

Vlad frowned, he could feel Jack staring at him. He had started a little after he’d needled at him about the accident in college. The man had been looking at his hands and then looked up at him. He had to wonder what was going through the idiot’s head. Probably some pathetic attempt at an apology.

Jack snatched his wrist in a vice grip, almost pulling him out of his seat. “What are you doing?” Vlad spluttered confused.

He looked uncertain, a frown on his face. “You have a pulse”

Vlad steeled his expression as he felt his blood run cold. This wasn’t happening. It couldn’t be. There was no way that the imbecilic oaf managed to figure it out. Had he somehow seen something in the lab?

“A pulse, what are you talking about Jack. Of course I have a pulse Jack, everyone does.” He blustered trying to brush it off.

“Jack what is going on?” Maddie questioned.

“He has a pulse Mads… but I saw.” Jack said confused.

“Saw what?

He’d seen, Vlad wanted to curse. Maddie hadn’t. He could still get out of this. “You were probably mistaken Jack, there was a lot going on down there.”

“No… I definitely saw you. You were like woosh! Blasting like the ghosts.”

“Jack, I gave him a gun.” He breathed a relieved sigh, Maddie the ever reliable had just given him an out.

“No before that! When he saved Jazzy.” Jack insisted.

Vlad gritted his teeth. Jack was clearly far too certain on what he had seen for his liking. Worse… or maybe better Maddie seemed to me thinking. She was being convinced. That idea terrified him but there was that hope.

“Jack, you must be mistaken.” Vlad tried pushing that hope out of the way. That wasn’t the plan. He couldn’t take the risk without knowing more.

“Vladdie. I know I’m not. I know why you’d be worried about us knowing whatever it is but look, we’re not against you. Look at Danno! If we can handle him being weird we can handle our best friend.”

Vlad scowled, the man wasn’t going to back down and of course the loveable ever trusting, apparently even toward certain ghosts Maddie was believing him.

“V-man, it was the accident wasn’t it?” Jack asked.

Maddie looked at him with a concern, not fear. He’d expected fear or anger. He’d hoped for better in the space of the last hour as he saw how they were with Daniel. But he was her child, even if he was more Jack than her. Vlad was the friend they hadn’t spoken to for years. Even with Daniel he’d never planned to let that slip and then along comes Jack as usual shattering his plans. A small part of him thought that for once that might have been a good thing.

“Yes.” he surrendered. He hated it but he couldn’t get out of it now.

“Why didn’t you say anything?” Jack asked.

Vlad scowled at the obliviousness “Why?! Why do you think!”

“Vlad, I’m sorry. I’m sorry we made you afraid to talk to us. We said some horrible things.” Maddie looked so guilty.

He looked up at Maddie, of course she would understand. “You didn’t know it referred to me. I should never have doubted your heart Maddie”

Maddie winced, he wondered what he had missed. There was another bolt of guilt in the air. “Vlad…”

“Oh this is perfect!” Jack shouted jumping up. The ghost behind him startling and floating over to Jasmine.

“What is, Jack?” Vlad didn’t keep the irritation from his voice at the interruption.

“V-man’s a ghost right? Well kind of! He can help us figure out Danno!”

Vlad blinked. He wasn’t really thinking that Vlad would help him after everything he’d done. He would much rather just watch Jack fail.

“We’ve been flying pretty blind with all this V, and you’ve been dealing with it for 20 years right. We could really use the help.”

Maddie looked thoughtful, she sighed. “Jack isn’t wrong, we don’t know what we’re doing. For as many theories that have been confirmed there is another thrown out the window. Not to mention the things we just don’t know.”

“Right, so it makes sense to have the expert involved!”

She frowned. “Jack we can’t, I’m sure Vlad is just passing through and after everything I doubt he wants to answer every little question we have.”

Passing through, that wasn’t what he was doing. He had cleared his schedule to make time to comfort a grieving Maddie. The subject of her grieving had very much been different than he had expected but it was still there. There was a temptation to say yes. He could take this moment and leave now, plan another attempt on Jack. Or he could stay. Help them. Work his way back into Maddie’s life. Await the opportunity against Jack in person. There would be no chance of missing his downfall then. And Maddie would already be much closer to him. She’d have so much to thank him for after he helped with Daniel.

“Actually, I came to check on you two. You did miss the reunion.” he said, deciding.

“Awe we missed it! We were looking forward to seeing everyone!” Jack dropped back into his seat.

“I was going to cancel… with Danny, we couldn’t.” Maddie said. “... with everything that happened I forgot.”

“I understand, I know how hard this must have been. He must be a lot to deal with.” It was understandable for it to be pushed out of Maddie’s mind.

Maddie nodded, “he’s not what we expected but it feels like there is never a moment to relax. We just don’t know enough.”

“Well I suppose I can make some arrangements and stay for a short while till you are better able to cope.”

“Really V-man.” Jack grinned.

Vlad cringed. “Yes,” he didn’t voice the unfortunately that he wanted to tack on.

It was worth it, he told himself. Worth it for the smile on Maddie’s face. Worth it for getting closer to her. Worth it for getting to see Jack be destroyed first hand. It would take a bit more planning to be sure his involvement wasn’t revealed but it would be all worth it. It would be worth it for the good will that it would net him with Maddie.

A wave of relief fell over the room at the offer, tinted with a mote of curiosity that was probably from the young ghost currently staring at him. He trampled down a smirk and his own aura. He let his confidence show but hid away the malice and smug disdain. He’d missed his chance before but now he had a chance to embed himself into Maddie’s life, to sow the seeds of descent and construct a web of lies. All of which would come together in his ultimate victory, Jack’s downfall and Maddie as his wife.

Chapter End Notes

I'm sorry to say this is where my bang fic ends, but this really was the best place to split the fic that was quickly becoming far bigger than I could keep up with while dealing with my own

family chaos. There will be more to this, I'll be back in October to start posting the second fic in the series. For those wondering about what Sam and Tucker are up to you'll get to see that in the next fic. They are a lot more involved and you'll get to see a little of what they've been doing during this fic.

I'm glad to see how many people have enjoyed reading this and I hope you stick around to see where its going in the rest of the series!

End Notes

Thanks for reading, I hope you enjoyed this as much as I did writing it! If you liked it please consider hopping over to tumblr and following both me and pricklenettle. We'd appreciate it and you can see what other things we get up to.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!